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FOR ALL TIME

THE STORY OF
A SCOTTISH FAMILY

BY

LYLA DICKSON FLAGLER

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is a MACPHERSON tartan.

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This book is dedicated to my son

LAWRENCE A. FLAGLER

Who, while not carrying the Dickson name, is
not too far removed from this influence; and to
those other descendants of this Scottish family.

"Among the sentiments of most powerful operation upon the human heart, and most highly honorable to the human character are those of veneration for our fore-fathers and love for our posterity." John Quincy Adams

This material has been assembled because of a desire to perpetuate the heritage of the past and to hope that succeeding generations leave their children as much to remember and honor as their ancestors have left them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Special appreciation is extended to the grandchildren, Phyllis, Jeanne and Sally who made it possible for the author to get to the towns Glasgow, Renton, Paisley, Johnstone, Ayr and Greenock and to know the native habitat of the roots of the family tree. And to Larry Flagler who helped in the mechanical details.

Special mention is made of the fact that Jeanne Dickson Flagler Lazor carries the Dickson name; and that, without her parents being aware of it, Sally Flagler Craig was given the name Sarah Helen which was the name of her great, great, great grandmother Sarah Helen Johnstone of Johnstone, Scotland.

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"As it Must to all Men".
No Longer a Scottish Family

CHAPTER I

THE SCOTTISH BACKGROUND

WHO WERE THE SCOTS

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
From morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

The uniqueness of Scotland and its deep rooted traditions persist in instilling in those of Scottish ancestry an inherited love for the "auld cauntrie." To understand this feeling of pride, and this exaltation in the glory of their past, a study of their history shows the source of marks of individuality which they possess.

This little country doesn't occupy much space and its population is not great. Their country is about the size of the State of Maine and their population is less than that of New York City. From whence did these people come? Their origin is not known. Did they come with Agricola who was sent over by the Romans about 78 A.D.? When the Romans came to Britain, they found a people speaking Gaelic which was the language of the Celts in Ireland. These original inhabitants were called

Picts, a tribe whose origin is unknown, but they are considered to be non Aryan. As these tribes found their way to the northern part of Great Britain the topography of the country there may have helped to make them the wild and rough people they became. The Romans gave the name of Caledonia to this Country.

These Picts whom the Romans found here are supposed to have been the earliest inhabitants of Scotland; they resembled the Iberians, a people which we now call the Basques. This ancestry may have been the source of the black hair and eyes so dominant among members of the family in our story.

Again there is reason to believe that the original Scots came from Ireland about the end of the Fifth Century. About 400 A.D. the Scots from Ireland made their presence known. The name of Scotland was derived from that of a people really Irish in origin. Scotia was a name previously applied to what is now Ireland.

When the Romans left in 410 they left the country prey to warlike tribes—the Picts, the Scots, the Welsh, and the Teutonic invaders. The Teutonic element came in as early as the fourth century. The southern part of the country was inhabited by another Celtic race, the Brythons or Britons of the same blood as the Welsh.

In this early period, the name Scotland was not used for this area in the north of Britain; it was not used until after the eleventh century. This was the Caledonia of the ancients, it was at first called Scotia a name previously applied to what is now Ireland. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the name was pretty well established. Later in 1066 William the Conqueror brought in a group from Flanders which settled in North England.

If the ancestor searcher goes back seventy or more generations he could pin a cannibal on the family tree, from then on to the present he could choose Irish, Pict, Roman, Teutonic, French. If you have black hair and black eyes these may have been left by the Picts, the bushy eyebrows may have come from the Romans, or the Basques. The sandy hair and blue eyes so common in Scotland may have been a contribution of the Celts.

With such a wide variety of ancestors, a wide variety of characteristics would result. The language pattern is amazing. When speaking to a Scotsman, you can scarcely understand him. His "burr" and his dialect are almost foreign; his kirks, his bairn, his wee bit of haggis are words in a dialect which came from the Celts and must be translated, but when you read letters coming from these same people you find the formal English of Britain used; occasionally, however, they do revert to their dialect.

When the reader reads the letters which are written from Scotland he will find few dialect words although dialect words were in common usage in conversation; and were used freely by Burns in his poems. It will be noticed that Burns in his poems uses the formal English as well as the dialect. The poem "To a Mouse" abounds in dialect.

"Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
Oh what a panic in thy breastie.
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be loath to rin and chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle!
But mousie thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best laid schemes of mouse an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
For promis'd joy."

"A Grace Before Dinner" is written in the formal English.

O thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless thee, God of Nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent:
And if it please thee, Heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But whether granted, or denied,
Lord bless us with content! Amen!

A NATIONAL AND FAMILY HERO

Sir William Wallace—"Guardian of the Kingdom of Scotland, and General of the Army of the same in the name of the noble Prince, the Lord John by the Grace of God illustrious King of Scotland by consent of the community of the same kingdom, to all good men of the said kingdom to whom this present writing shall come eternal salvation in the Lord."

(Written at the death of Wallace.)



SIR WILLIAM WALLACE
"Guardian of the Kingdom"

"The Scots who hae with Wallace bled
Scots whom Bruce has often led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victorie.

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins;
But they shall—they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Forward! Let us do or die!"

Robert Burns was a fervent patriot and his admiration for Sir William Wallace was kindled by a book given him, by the blacksmith, when he was ten. The title of this book was "The Life of Sir William Wallace".

Because of their more or less common British background, the Scots felt equal to the British and refused to be conquered by them, preferring poverty and war to the peace and prosperity they might have had if they had permitted themselves to be conquered by the British. The Scottish kings ruled until 1603 when James VI of Scotland became James I of England but each country maintained its own independent parliament and system of government.

All families have their traditions. One of the traditions in the Dickson family is that they are descendants of Sir William Wallace the rebellious patriot of Scotland. This could well be for Wallace was born and lived in Ayr the area from which many Dicksons came. The facts are difficult to ascertain as most of the recorded history about Wallace was written 200 years after he lived, by the poet, Blind Harrie.

The old cliché, that if you look long enough you will find a horse thief or a murderer on your family tree, holds true in this case for Sir William was outlawed and driven into rebellion against the English because of an act of violence which occurred at Dundee. Wallace is said to have slaughtered a young Englishman named Selby for an insult offered to him and because of this he was in a state of rebellion against England to the time of his death.

Sir William Wallace was a Scottish patriot, born, probably, at Elderslie near Paisley and lived from 1272 to 1305 when he was executed by Edw. I of England. Members of the Wallace family were enemies of England and Wallace's brief life was spent in rebellion against Edw. I. The exact date of his birth is not known, probably about 1272 but he died at London, August 24, 1305. He was the second son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie and Auchinbothie in Renfrewshire, and of his wife Margaret, daughter of Sir Reginald Crawford of Crosby, hereditary Sheriff of Ayr. They were connected with the Stewarts of Scotland. Wallace was schooled in formal education by the monks of the Abbey of Paisley. His career was of fourteen months duration, from May 1297 to July 1298 and his death occurred six years later.

Wallace had one brother, Malcolm, who was older, possibly another brother, John and perhaps two sisters. The family was said to be in a position of "easy fortune". Wallace means Welsh so the family was probably of Welsh origin.

Finding the facts about Sir William's domestic life is even more difficult than finding the facts about his family. In recorded writings Wallace had two wives, his first one Marian Braidfoot was killed because she would not betray the hiding place of some important documents Monteith had turned over to Wallace. In prison he was united in marriage to Helen who died at his coffin. He may have had a wife previous to Marian. At least Blind Harry asserts that a daughter was born to Wallace and his wife and that she married a squire named Shaw and that "right goodly men came of this lady young." Marian Braidfoot to whom he had been married for a year in 1297 was reputed to "be a humble heiress of Leamington".

Wallace who drove the English from the country was a great hero to the Scots. Because of his victory at Stirling Bridge near Stirling Castle where he burned the town and the castle, he was given the title "Guardian of the Kingdom."



STIRLING CASTLE

Courtesy of the British Travel Association.

STIRLING CASTLE

"Here Stuarts once in glory reign'd
And laws for Scotland's weal ordain'd;
But now unroofed their palace stands,
Their sceptres sway'd by other hands;
The injured Stuart line is gone,
A race outlandish fills their throne,
An idiot race to honour lost,
Who knew them best, despise them most."

There is a book which all good Scotsmen read and in Grandmother Dickson's diaries of 1841 and 1842 written when she was teaching school at Barnet, Vermont (this was the step grandmother) she writes that she spent a sleepless night and states that during the evening she has been reading "The Scottish Chiefs". This book, "best seller" of its day is well worth sampling. Considerable space is devoted to Sir William Wallace.

In his last days Wallace devoted much time to works of benevolence and in the book we read of these activities. "Sweetest Marian what merit has thy Wallace in mere benevolence; contracted now is my sphere of duty and easily fulfilled; it is only to befriend the oppressed to the utmost of my power and while tyranny leaves me that privilege I shall not consider myself quite a slave. Were I useless to my fellow creatures I should be miserable, for, in blessing others, I bless myself. I bless thee my poor Marian and the grateful countenance of these poor people add beauty even to this."

One of the daring exploits of Sir William was in connection with the safe keeping of important papers of Douglas. One day a chieftain arrived at Sir William's gate; after an hour with the chieftain, Sir John Monteith, Wallace called for his horse and four servants and left. He went to Douglas. At the Castle of Monteith he was taken across the draw bridge into a court yard, then into a room; the door was closed and Wallace was asked to swear to secrecy, which he would not do, saying that his word was of more value than an oath, that they must trust the word of a Scotsman. Monteith then gave Wallace a box of annals sent by Lord Douglas for safe keeping.

In this secret conversation it was learned that Lord Douglas had been "wrested" from the country and that the Stone of Scone had been taken. In the words of Wallace, "Not only the 'brae' Douglas was wrested from the country but so was our King and that holy pillar of Jacob which prophets have declared the palladium of Scotland." "What!" inquired Wallace with a frown "Has Balliol robbed Scotland of the trophy of one of her best kings? Is the sacred gift of Fergus to be made the spoil of a sword?"

The tradition relative to the stone is as follows; Huber or Iber who came from the Holy Land to inhabit the coasts of Spain brought this sacred relic along with him. From Spain he transplanted it with the colony he sent out to people the south of Ireland; and from Ireland it was brought into Scotland by the great Fergus, the son of Ferchand. He placed it in Argyllshire, but MacAlpine removed it to Scone and fixed it in the

royal chair in which all succeeding kings of Scotland were inaugurated. Edward the first of England caused it to be placed in Westminster Abbey where it now stands.

For a brief interval in 1950 and 1951 this sacred relic or "Stone of Destiny" was back in Scotland. Six hundred and fifty years after it had been taken to Westminster Abbey, a group of Scottish students conceived and executed a very daring plan to carry this 400 pound stone back to Scottish soil. It required 112 hours to complete the theft. They began on the night of Dec. 23, 1950 and had the stone out in the early morning of Dec. 25. Although they thought they had left many clues, the London police were unsuccessful in solving the crime. The Scottish police hated to apprehend the thieves but they did their job and did it well. On April 11 the stone, wrapped in Scotland's flag of St. Andrew was left at the ruins of Abroath Abbey.

Another exploit in the life of Wallace was the "Burning of the Barns of Ayr". The chief nobles of the west of Scotland were invited to an "assize" at Ayr and were treacherously hanged by the English. Wallace retaliated by burning the Barns of Ayr with the English in them. The Barns of Ayr were the barracks or palace built in that town by King Edward for the occasional residence of his vice-roy the Lord Warden.

In 1298 Edward entered Scotland with an army of 7000 men at arms and 80,000 footmen. He laid the country in ashes, forced the King and his nobles to acknowledge him their liege lord. Many of the nobles thus purchased life at the price of Liberty and Honor. Wallace returned to fight back the enemy but his army of 1000 was too weak and he was defeated. The Scots resisted for some time but later arrived at terms of peace. It was during his retirement that Wallace devoted his time to his wife, Marian, and to helping the poor and distressed.

Wallace paid for his resistance against the English with his life. He was carried to London, put on trial and executed for treason and rebellion. When he was impeached as a traitor he made the simple reply that he could not be a traitor to the King of England for he never was his subject and never swore fealty to him.

In 1296 when Edward marched against Scotland and carried off the Stone of Scone, he touched off a war which lasted for 300 years and ended when James VI, son of Mary Queen of Scots, became James I of England.

Wallace was found guilty of being a traitor to England and he was executed under circumstances of unusual cruelty. Wallace was a loyal Scotsman, his life had been an inspiration to his country; he was a good statesman, he was patriotic and he was a good fighter.

Robert Bruce was another National hero whose background merged with the Dicksons and with Sir William Wallace. In 1307 at the Battle of Bannockburn, the Scots defeated Edward II and acknowledged Robert Bruce as King. The Bruce was a noble family of Scotland, two members of which occupied the throne. The most famous is the eighth Robert, who became King of Scotland in 1301. The dominant note of Robert's reign was freedom, the liberation of the nation from foreign bondage and of the individual from oppression.

Bruce too was from Ayr, the native home of Sir William Wallace and the birthplace of Grandfather George Dickson. Ayr is a city immortalized by the poet "Bobby Burns" who lived at Alloway near here and wrote about all the familiar landmarks. Alloway is a quiet village with fields and streams and winding roads.

A history of Sir William Wallace was written in Latin by Mr. John Blair, Chaplain to Wallace, and turned into metre by Blind Harrie in the days of King James IV. The title of this book is "The History of the Life, Adventures, and Heroic Actions of the Celebrated Sir William Wallace General and Governor of Scotland." Mr. Blair displays no hesitancy in extolling the virtues of his fellow countrymen.

"Of our ancestors, brave true ancient Scots,
Whose glorious scutcheons knew no bars nor blots;
And blood untainted circled every vein,
And everything ignoble did disdain;

Of such I say, I'll brag and vaunt so long,
As I have power to use my pen or tongue;
And sound their praises in such a modern strain,
As suiteth best a Scot's poetic vein."

WHO WERE THE DICKSONS—

UNTANGLING THE ROOTS

The first recorded history of the name Dickson seems to go back to 1249 to a Richard who was the son of the Great Marshal Hervey de Keith. A marshal was a person of high rank in the King's household.

This Richard was commonly called Dick and his sons "were styled" after him the affix of a "son" in the Lowlands answering to the prefix of "Mac" in the Highlands. His mother was Margaret, daughter of Wm. III, Lord Douglas.

This first Dickson of whom we read was evidently a person of very good standing such as a grandson of the Earl Marshall might be expected to be. He was also a clansman of the Douglas clan. He was the son of Dick Thomas the faithful follower of the Douglas in the surprise capture of Castle Douglas. Richard, a younger son of the Earl of Keith went to the Lowlands near Berwick where he was known as Dick and where he achieved notoriety as a warrior. His son known as "Dick's" son performed such valiant services for his King that he was knighted, whereupon he took the name of Dickson.

We also read of a Thomas Dickson, Laird of Symonston and Haselside county of Lanock and Castellan, the son of Dick de Keith born about 1247.

In a charter from King Robert Bruce, about 1306. the name occurs as *filius Ricardi* also written as *fil Dick*. The charter is endorsed "*Carta Thoma fil Dick*." Blind Harrie who wrote the life of Sir William Wallace included many references to Thomas Dickson; in this metrical history we read. "Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie near Paisley in the shire of Renfrew, was a remarkable person of the Scottish Party."

Thomas Dickson, a young man "bald and hardy" was a vassal of Sir William Douglas of Douglasdale. It was chiefly by his means that Sir William Douglas took the castle of San-

quhar. Afterwards when Sir William himself was besieged in that castle he was sent to procure the assistance of Wallace.

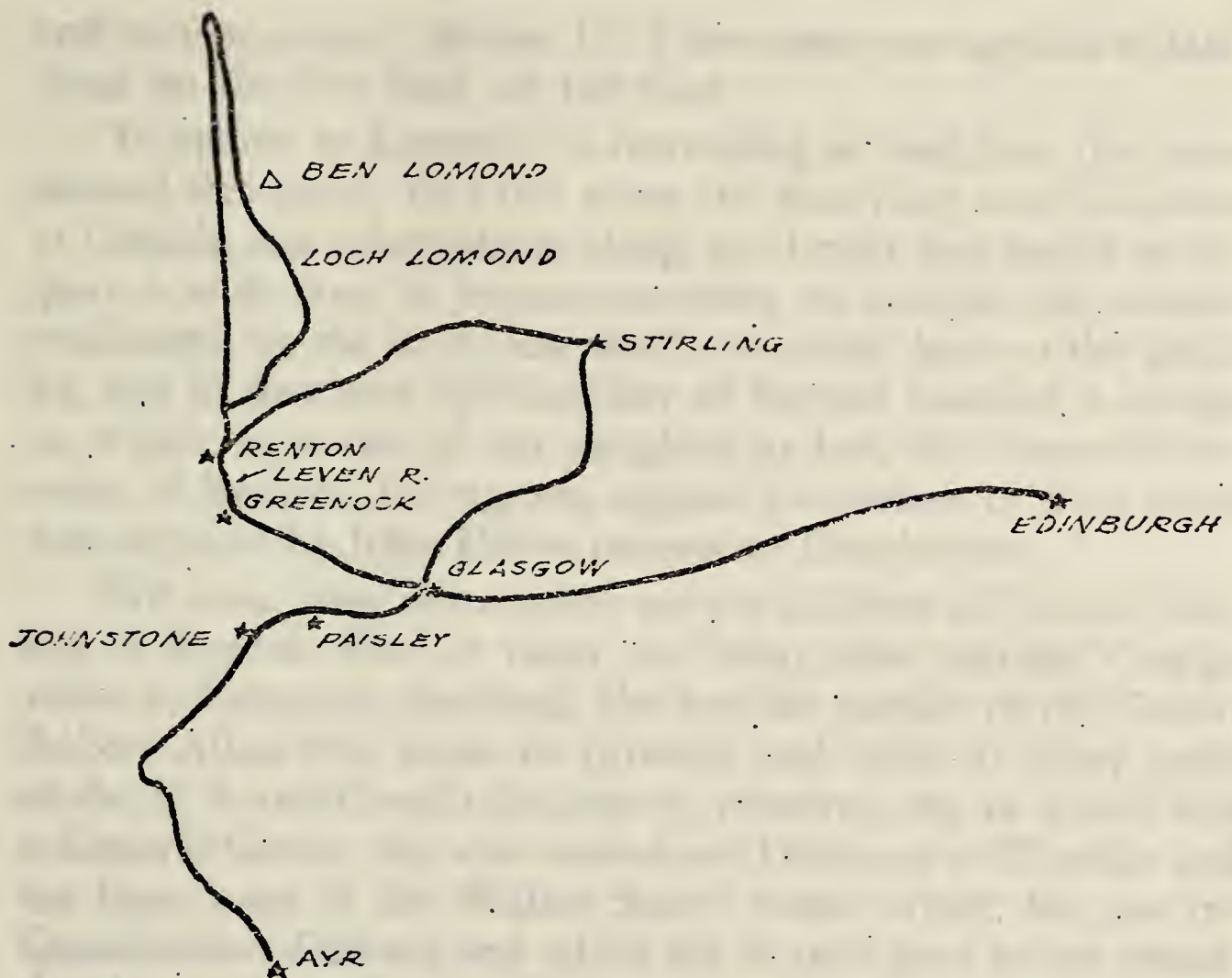
The lands in Hazelside in Douglasdale in the shire of Lanark were bestowed upon him by Sir William Douglas in reward of his many good services.

The Dicksons are said to be all descended of Richard de Keith.

The name Johnstone is also found in Blind Harrie's History. Sir John de Johnstone ancestor of the Marquess of Annandale was a man of good degree in Elderslie. Wallace appointed him governor of the Castle of Lochmahen. His wife was the second daughter of Thomas Halliday, nephew of Wallace.

In the words of Blind Harrie we read "The Sawchar was a castell fayr and strang. It was throucht force that euir be maid thar im band. A young man then, that hardy was and bauld. Born till himself and Thom Dycson was cauld. 'Der Freynd', he said, 'I wald preiff at my micht, and make a foray to fals Bewford the Knycht. In Sawchar, duellys and dois full gret owtrage Sall for you pass with Anderson to spek. Cusyng to me; frendship he will nocht brek. For that ilk man thar wod ledys thaim tell; Throucht help of him perhaps ye may fullfil? To the Sawcher Dykson allayn he said "'And the son maid Anderson this end. Dickson sud tak bathe his hors and his weid. Be it was da a drawchet off wad to leid. Anderson told quhoit stuff thar was thorin. Till Dicson that was ner off his kyn'. I'l thai ar off men off mekill wall. Be thai on fute thai will yow sayr assayll. Gyff thou hapnys the entre for to get. On thy rycht hand a stalwart ax is set. Thar with thou may defend thee in a thrang; Be Douglace wys he bydes nocht fra thee lang.'"

It is reported that as early as 1563 King Eric XIV of Sweden recruited 2,000 Scots for his armies. Again in 1618 King Gustavus Adolphus brought many Scots into his army. Other Scots came to Sweden and were leaders in industry. Robert Dickson became a Gothenburg ship owner, tradesman, iron master and one of Sweden's richest men. He and his descendants gave liberally to arts and sciences and he helped send Nansen to explore the Arctic.



The members of the Dickson family were born in and lived in towns in and near the Glasgow area. Renton was the birthplace of John Dickson b. 1777.

We next draw aside the curtains of the family history when great grandfather John Dickson was born at Renton, Scotland in 1788. He was the son of James Dickson. John married Sarah Helen Johnstone of Johnstone, Scotland. She was born Oct. 2, 1790.

The name Johnstone is an old name. In 1663 Mr. David Johnstone, a student in Divinity School, formerly designated by the name of Souter, petitioned to Parliament, in 1663, to take his own name Johnstoun or Johnstone as it became. The name Souter was derived from the word meaning "cobbler", as a Souter was a cobbler. The Johnstouns took the name Souter in 1460 when "they came to Annandale upon some discontent—and assumed the name of Souter that thereby they should not be noticed for the time." Parliament granted the petition of Mr. David Johnstoun, stating that Johnstoun was their "true

and ancient name." Before 1773 the name was applied to land lying on the left bank of the Cart.

To return to Renton it is interesting to read how the town secured this name. In 1762 when the bleaching establishments at Cordale and other places along the Leven had begun to acquire a wide fame it became necessary to increase the accommodations for the workmen which the trade drew to the locality, and in that year Mrs. Smoller of Bonhill founded a village on which, in honor of her daughter in law, she bestowed the name of Renton. Levingrove, originally a portion of ferry lands was acquired by John Dixon provost of Dumbarton.

We have some information on the children of James Dickson of Renton. One of them was Mary who married George Allan of Greenock, Scotland. She was the mother of the Cousin Robert Allan who came to America and went to many parts of the U. S. and Canada looking up relatives, one of whom was a General Grebb. He also visited our Dicksons at Waneka and we have a set of Sir Walter Scott's works which he gave to Grandmother Dickson and which she in turn gave to her granddaughter. It is Cousin Robert's grandson who has helped gather some of the data for this story. He lives at Greenock and his name is Major Robert Allan Clapperton Stewart. He was a Clapperton but, on inheriting Stewart property, it became necessary for him to take the name Stewart. The Allans have been leading citizens of Greenock. Two of Robert Allan's daughters were Ladies; one is Lady Reid, the wife of Sir Archibald Douglas Reid and the other was Lady Ramsay, the wife of Sir Malcolm Graham Ramsay who was Controller of the Treasury. Sir Archibald Reid was a well known radiologist who died from the effects of radiation. A letter from a sister of Lady Reid, states "he lost three fingers then the radiation went inwards, causing death."

Another daughter of James Dickson, Mary, married a Spiers of Paisley. The Spiers were also a family of distinction. This Mary was left-handed; she was born without a right arm.

A son, Thomas, was a successful business man in Greenock; he may have been a dealer in such commodities as are sold in

building supply houses. One of James's sons was a building contractor in a 'largish way'. We have the snuff boxes, Masonic emblems, and a lock of hair which belonged to "Uncle" Thomas, of about 1800.

The story of another son, Robert, is told by cousin Robert Stewart in Greenock. "Bob, in 1810, went out one evening for a smoke and was captured by the Press Gang for the Navy. His ship went to the Blockade of the Spanish Coast and, as he was a bad sailor, he volunteered for the Army ashore at Torres Vedras and became one of the order of Wellington's Dragoons. During the campaign he was captured by the French under Marshall Sonel and was sent as a prisoner of war to Marseilles where he was billeted as a baker. When peace was declared in 1815 he just stayed on helping the baker. As he had not written to his people they naturally thought he was dead but he wound up in Greenock all safe and many years after. Grandfather (Robert Allan) had his Regimental Sabre. I think it was some of that generation's families who emigrated to the United States—the ones grandfather knew and went to see—they were his first cousins." The Grandfather Allan did come to Wisconsin to see his cousins.

This "Press Gang" which captured the Uncle Robert, was a cruel and vicious system, which, some historians say, made it possible for Lord Nelson to win his naval victories. Lord Nelson needed sailors for his navy. There were certain men who were obligated to serve and these men could be bodily pressed into service as the Crown claimed the right to "impress" able bodied subjects for service. However as the need for men grew greater the press-men became no respecter of persons and all men knew their tactics and feared them. With Uncle Bob it was a moment's carelessness and a life time of regret. He paid very dearly for his evening stroll and smoke. This system extended to the United States where the British insisted on the right to "press" into service in the British Navy British subjects in America.

The wife of John Dickson was Sarah Helen Johnstone of Johnstone. Records of her family are scant. The records may

not be scant but the writer of this story has not as yet made a study of this line. There were Wallaces in Johnstone for more than 200 years, thus there was considerable Wallace in the Ayr and the Johnstone backgrounds.

We have one letter addressed to Sarah's mother from Sarah's brother Archibald written November 22, 1800.

Mrs. Arch. Johnstone

At the Bridge of Johnstone

McDongle Street

H. M. Ship R. George

near Paisley

Einkderspt

N. Brittain

Mary and George, Torbay, Nov. 22, 1800

(The name of this ship was His Majesty's Ship,
the Royal George)

Hon. Mother

This with my duty to you and to inform you that I am in Good Health as I hope is the case with you. I have wrote to you 3 letters and am surprised that I can get no answer. Having received no letter from you since March 1 if I have offended you in any respect I am entirely ignorant of it and therefore I desire your immediate answer to this. Blessed be God now Peace is made. I hope in a few months to have the happiness of seeing you but there has been no ships as yet sailed (or paid) off nor do I see any prospect of it at Present I know not where my Father's Ship is so that I can give you no account of him. Later than about five weeks ago he was then very well.

I have nothing particular to mention but my love to my brothers and sisters—respects to all enquiring friends

and Remain Your Dutyfull son

Arch Johnstone

P.S. I beg you to write directly

Direct to Torbay at Epenhamppt

Evidently the young man was in the navy and the Peace was after the French and English conflict. The father too must have been in the navy or engaged in some commerce on the sea.

The towns in which the Dicksons lived were all in the area around Glasgow-Renton, Johnstone, Paisley and Ayr. This was an industrial area and the manufacturing of textiles was one of the leading industries.

Paisley is a burgh in Scotland in the county of Renfrew. It grew around an old Abbey which was founded in 1163. This Abbey was founded by Walter Fitzlan, ancestor of the Scottish royal family, the first of the Stuarts. The town is of ancient origin, at one time it was a Roman station under the name of Vandura. At Paisley they manufactured shawls, textiles and threads. Paisley shawls were at one time very fashionable and the patterns used in weaving them were unsurpassed. They also wove carpets and tartans. The Anchor Mills were well known.

George Aitkin Clark was a thread manufacturer here from 1823 to 1873. Clark's O. N. T. thread was a household word. Mr. Clark married a Katherine Turnbull one of the Turnbells into whose family George Dickson married when he married Jane Turnbull at Hartford, Conn. Clark was a leading man of Paisley and gave much toward the Town Hall.

The weavers of this day and this locality were a very important part of society. Robert Burns wrote a poem or a marching song dedicated to the weaver and a writer of that time comments on the profession in his notes on the poem.

THE GALLANT WEAVER

"Where Cart rins rowin to the sea
By mony a flow'r and spreading tree
There lives a lad, the lad for me,
He is a gallant weaver.
Oh! I had wooers aught or nine,
They gied me rings and ribbons fine;
And I was fear'd my heart would tine
And I gied it to the weaver.

My dadie sign'd my locker - band
To gie the lad that has the lang;
But to my heart I'll add my hand,
And gie it to the weaver.
While birds rejoice in leafy bowers;
While bees delight in op'ning flowers
While corn grows green in summer showers.
I'll love my gallant weaver"

The author of a collection of poems by Burns comments as follows: "Ladies may toss their heads at the humble choice of our heroine; but it was not quite so lowly as they may be pleased to suppose. In more primitive times,—nay within the memory of men-carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, or weavers were considered superior in station to husbandmen; their scientific knowledge raised them in the estimation of their countrymen above the humble tillers of the soil."

The White Cart river or stream is in Renfrewshire and flows near the town of Paisley, and borders Johnstone.

There is a book, "Kil'barchan, a Parish History" by the Rev. Robt. D. MacKenzie which contains many names of Scottish cousins such as Muir, Napier, Johnstone, Spiers and others. Of Sir William Napier, Parkhill writes—"In 1840 when the policy of force had given place to that of moral suasion, a flourishing Chartist congregation sprang up in Kilbarchan which met in what is now the Good Templar's Hall. A Chartist church has been constituted and a talented preacher has been inducted. The highways and byways are empty on Sabbath days and on that day the Fumart is unmolested and at rest in the Pinnel Glen. This change must be a source of great consolation to the pious patron of the parish, Sir Wm. Napier. His temper was often tried by the turbulent immorality of the little town and the way in which they spent the Sabbath day vexed in no mean degree his righteous spirit and in particular the quiet in which he loved to dwell was often invaded by the noise of the villagers crowded upon the Barrhill. Now all is quiet and the worthy Baronet may exercise his devotional propensities in meekness and peace without the peculiar suavity of his temper being ruffled".

CHAPTER II

THE CLANS OF SCOTLAND

"THE GATHERING OF THE CLAN"

A phrase frequently used to describe the Scottish people is, "they are a clannish people." They could scarcely be otherwise having, as they do, a historic background so deeply rooted in a clan system which was the foundation of the primitive tribes of Scotland. This extraordinary clan spirit has prevailed in Scotland to a greater extent than in other countries; clans are a part of the background of all peoples but it persists to the present day in Scottish groups and it shows no signs of becoming eradicated. Although it is more a part of the culture of the Highlander, it continues to the "border" countries, that area between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders. The assumption is that the border extends from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth. The Lowlanders occupy only about one tenth of the land but they include about two thirds of the population and most of the industries.

The customs, costumes, traditions, and vocabulary have played a great part in maintaining the clan system. Scottish clanism is a survival of the primitive tribalism on which the early Scottish society was built. The entire system of clans, and tartans for each clan, was based upon the idea of showing the relationship of the members of the clan to the chief. In our family we were told when we were children that the Scots are clannish. We knew that they liked to be together in a group and would "stick together" in an emergency, but we little realized the meaning and traditions of the clans which made these people so loyal to their kind and which are responsible for the perpetuation of all of these customs.

"The gathering of the clan" was the expression used when there was to be a family picnic or any gathering of a group of Scots.

Some of the terms used and the meaning of these terms are:

Bag pipe or the "pipes"—a complex instrument of remote antiquity; a system of reed pipes and a leather bag from which air is forced into the reed pipes; these may have been introduced by the Romans to the British Isles then to Ireland, then to Scotland.

Clanna—children; members of a clan are "children" of the chief.

Clan chief—the traditional head of the children of a clan family. The ancient chief owned the people and the land of his clan.

Coat of arms—ensigns of honor and gentility.

Plaid—is a garment, a blanket like mantle which is folded in various ways and joined at the left shoulder with a large brooch. The word plaid comes from a Gaelic word, *tar-sium*, meaning a cloth, referring to the crossing bars of color.

Septs—are dependent families, usually descended from early members of a clan but often a family living in the territory of a clan and going into battle with that clan and becoming a Sept more or less by adoption, by wearing the "cath-dath" battle colors of that clan.

Sett—a pattern of overlayed checks in bright colors.

Tartan—is cloth bearing a pattern of overlayed checks in several bright colors woven in a cloth.

Parts of the Highlanders costume. (Because clans are more a part of the Highlander's culture we find here more attention paid to the costume.)

Bonnet—the typical clan cap

Brooch—the large pin on the shoulder

Skeandhu—a small dirk (dagger) worn in the stocking

Knife and fork—secreted in the hilt of the dirk

Sporran—a leather purse or pouch usually covered with fur or hair worn hanging from front of the belt; only boys wear sporrans. Harry Lauder spoke about the sporran in his entertainment; "My wife she used to ripe my pooches and this is the reason I wore the sporran."

Scarlet jacket—the jacket may be of any solid color

Insignia of the regiment—Various regiments had their own insignia.

Probably no national costume has retained its individuality more persistently than the Scottish, and the tartan is symbolic of the clan. When its use began is not known. Tartans were not exclusively Scottish but were an early elaboration of primitive weaving. Patterns similar to some authentic clan patterns are found in remote isolated communities and among fishing peoples in both Europe and Asia. There is Nazare a little fishing township on the coast of Portugal, where the rock-bound and comparatively isolated community is said to be peopled by descendants of the early pre-Christian Phoenician traders. The men there wear baggy trousers of tartan cloth and tartan shirts, no two being alike.

In Scotland, the idea of attaching one or two particular tartans to one clan may have developed because the vegetable dyes used were often found only in one special district. People would copy colors and patterns until a color and pattern would mark a person as coming from a certain district. The dyes used were produced from lichens and other plants and produced more mellow and more lasting colors than some modern dyes.

The earliest use of the tartan was not to show the tribe or clan but to show rank or position. The cloths of a servant had one color; rent paying farmers two colors; officers, three; chieftain, five and a king was entitled to seven. Gradually, however, each clan took to wearing kilts and plaids of the same color.

The tartan was originally worn as a belted plaid or "Breacan-feile"; the wearer took a piece of tartan cloth, wrapped it about his body and fastened it with a belt which gathered the material into folds which later developed into the pleating of the kilt. The upper part of the tartan was thrown over the shoulder and fastened with a brooch, or it could be pulled up over the head or over both shoulders in wet weather. Today the upper portion and the lower portion have been separated into plaid and kilt. The belted plaid is

literally a blanket in size and becomes the "Highland" overcoat. This great piece of cloth which was both great coat and blanket eventually became pleated and developed into the kilt. This development came before the 18th century. When the Romans came they noted that the tartan was characteristic of the Celtic peoples.

Burns wrote about the plaid in these lines:

"O wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea:
My plaidie to the angry airt (direction of the wind)
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee."

After the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 the use of tartans or any part of the Highland costume was suppressed by an Act of Parliament which was not repealed until 1782.

The Highlanders considered it a mark of shame and effeminacy to be forced to wear trousers during this period of prohibition. Those who joined the Army were permitted to wear their kilts and consequently thousands joined the newly formed Highland regiments. Queen Victoria who had a passion for Highland customs designed a tartan of her own with a white background.

Each summer there is held what is called the Braemar gathering at Braemar a district in S.W. Aberdeenshire. The reigning King or Queen attends this magnificent spectacle which includes a march by the local people past three local clans, the Royal Stuart, The Duff, and the Farquharson all in their tartan attire.

The terms which are used in connection with genealogies are confusing; the definitions for the terms used in connection with the discussion of the clans are defined by the dictionary as follows:

Armorial bearings—heraldic devices on a coat of arms.

Coat of arms—a shield marked with the insignia or designs (herald bearings) of a person.

Crest—a heraldic device placed above the shield in a coat of arms, used separately on seals, silverware, notepaper.

Heraldry—the art or science having to do with the coats of arms, genealogies.

Herald's College—in England a royal corporation in charge of granting and recording armorial emblems and coats of arms, keeping records of genealogies.

Our Dicksons may claim eligibility in two Clans, the Macpherson Clan and the Johnstone Clan. The Dicksons belonged to the Macpherson Clan; there is also a Gunn Clan to which some of the Johnstones belonged. If we could obtain proof that we could trace our ancestry to the Wallaces we could lay claim to that Clan. In some books the Turnbulls are listed with a Clan but in others their name does not appear.

The Macphersons are Celts. The name means "Son of the Parson" and one Duncan Parsoun is mentioned in 1438 as having been prisoner in Tantalion Castle. His family seems to have sprung from the Strathnairn district where his descendants held property before any of the Macphersons attached to Clan Chattan.

The Macpherson is a clan which has more than one tartan; they have one for general use, one for Hunting, and one for Dress. The Dress tartan is sometimes known as the Cluny after the Chief of that name. In 1829 a correspondent of Sir Walter Scott wrote as follows "Cluny Macpherson appeared at the late fancy ball at Edinburgh in his beautiful and genuine tartan which excited universal admiration."

Badge: Dress - Red Whortleberry; Hunting - White Heather; Clan - Boxwood.

Battle cry: Creag Dhubh Chloinn Challain (The Black Rock of Clan Chattan).

Crest: A cat sejant proper

Arms: Touch not the cat bot a glove

Pipe music: Macpherson's March

The Johnston or Johnstone Clan was a border clan, powerful and famous in Border song and story. They derived their name from the barony of Johnstone in Annandale and their name occurs in records of the thirteenth century.

Badge: Red Hawthorne

Crest: A phoenix in flames, proper

Arms: Black St. Andrew's cross on a silver background, upper third of the shield is red bearing three golden cushions or wool sacks.

The Johnstones also belonged to a Gunn Clan. This was a warlike clan, the name Gunn is derived from the Norse word "gunnr" meaning war. The Gunns and the Keiths were continually at war with each other. Sir William Gunn of this clan was knighted by Charles I for having been instrumental in defeating the Austrians in 1636.

Badge: Aitionnor Juniper; Lus nan laoch or Rose root

Crest: A dexter arm wielding a broad sword proper

Arms: Aut pax Aut Bellum. A silver shield bearing a three-masted galley with sails furled and red flags flying. In the upper third or chief of the shield, which is blue, is a five pointed star of silver; on each side of the star is a silver bear's head which is muzzled.

Pipe music: The Gunn's Salute

The Clan Wallace comprises the Wallises and the Wallaces. The name was a Welsh name. They were all descended from the original family of Riccarton. Richard Wallace in the twelfth century obtained extensive lands in Ayrshire. His son obtained lands in Renfrewshire. The great grandson of the latter was Sir William Wallace of whom we have written at some length.

Crest: A dexter arm vambraced the hand, brandishing a sword proper

Arms: A silver shield which bears a red lion; around the edge of the shield is added a border of alternate rectangles of silver and blue.

The Turnbull family was a border family located in the shires of Berwick and Roxburgh.

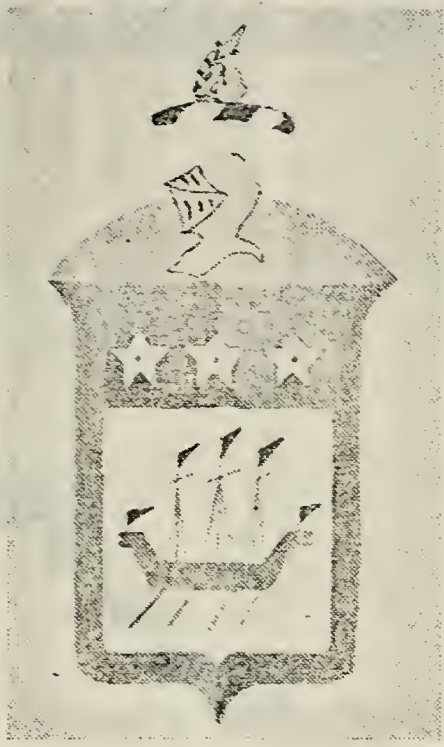
Crest: A silver shield on which are three black bull's heads with green horns.



A SCOTTISH PIPER

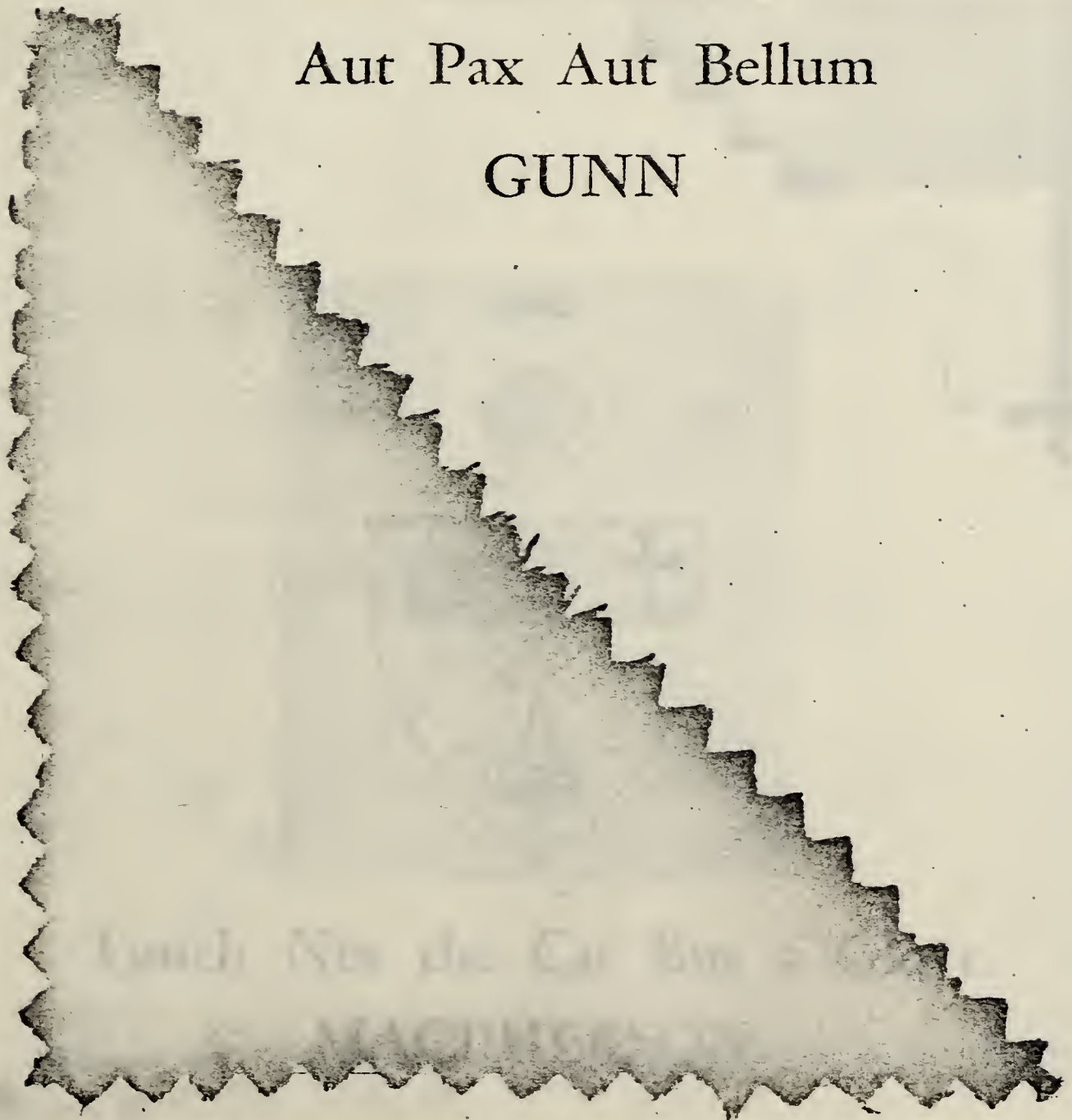
Courtesy of the British Travel Association

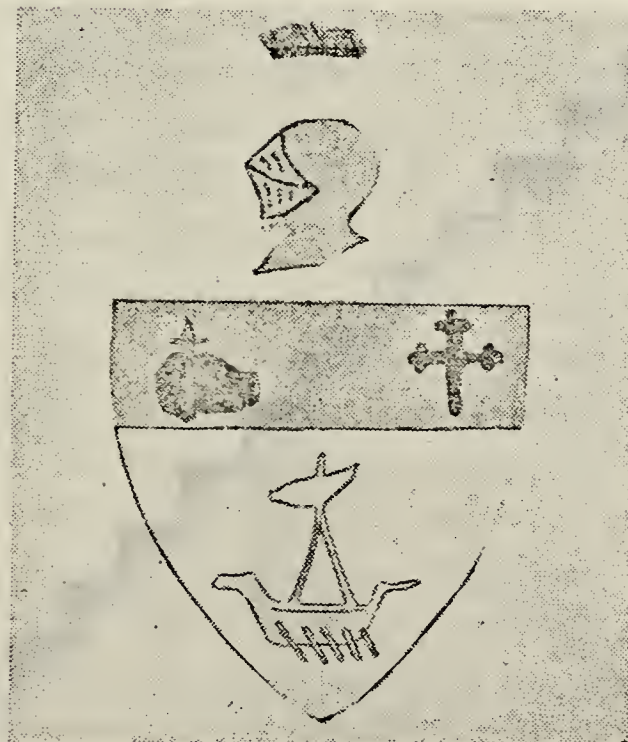
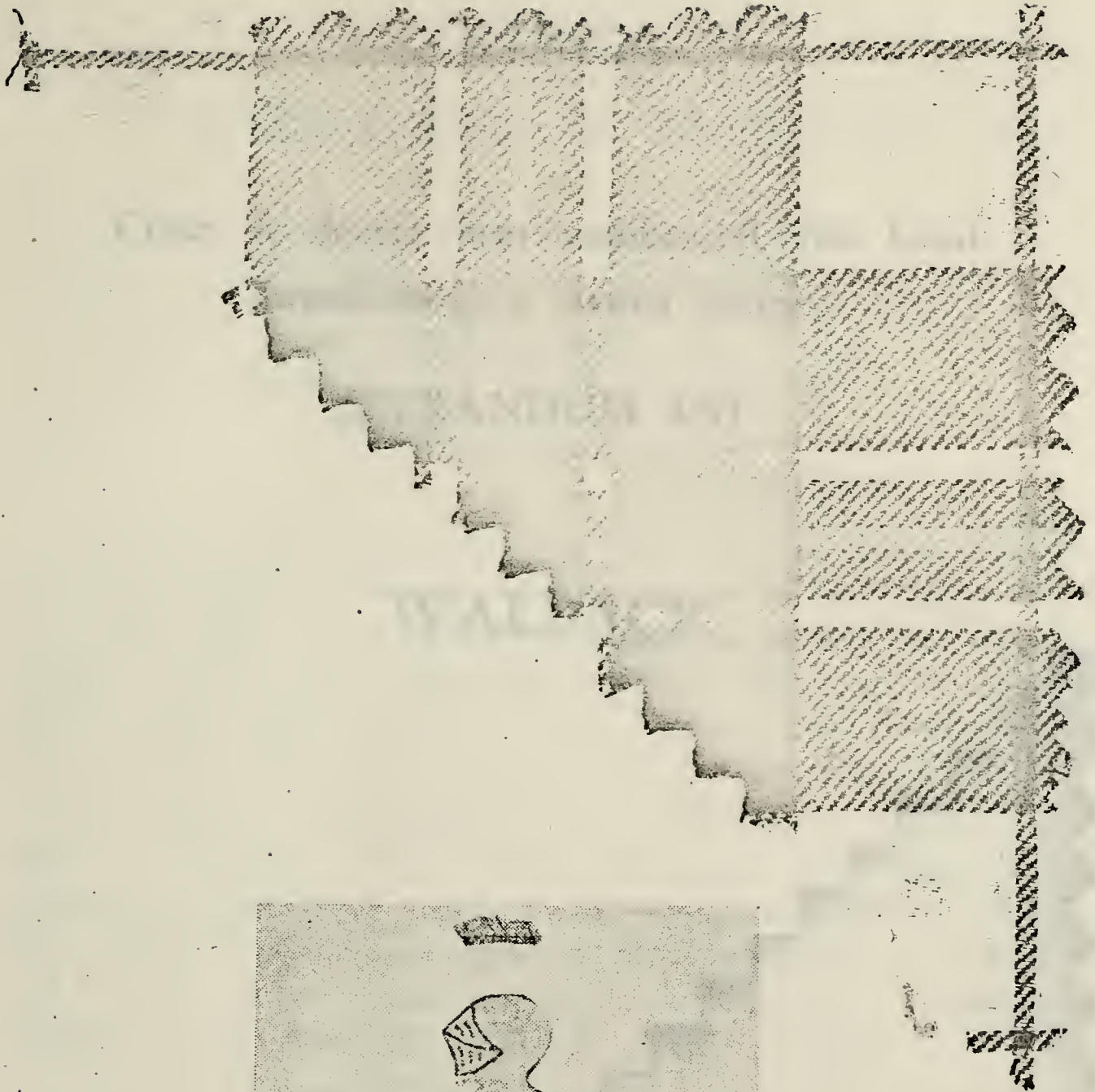
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Aut Pax Aut Bellum

GUNN





Touch Not the Cat But a Glove
MACPHERSON

Crest: A dexter arm vambraced, the hand
brandishing a sword proper.

SPERANDUM EST

WALLACE

CHAPTER III

FAMILY LIFE IN SCOTLAND

NO OUTWARD SPLENDOR

"To make a happy fireside clime,
To weens and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life."

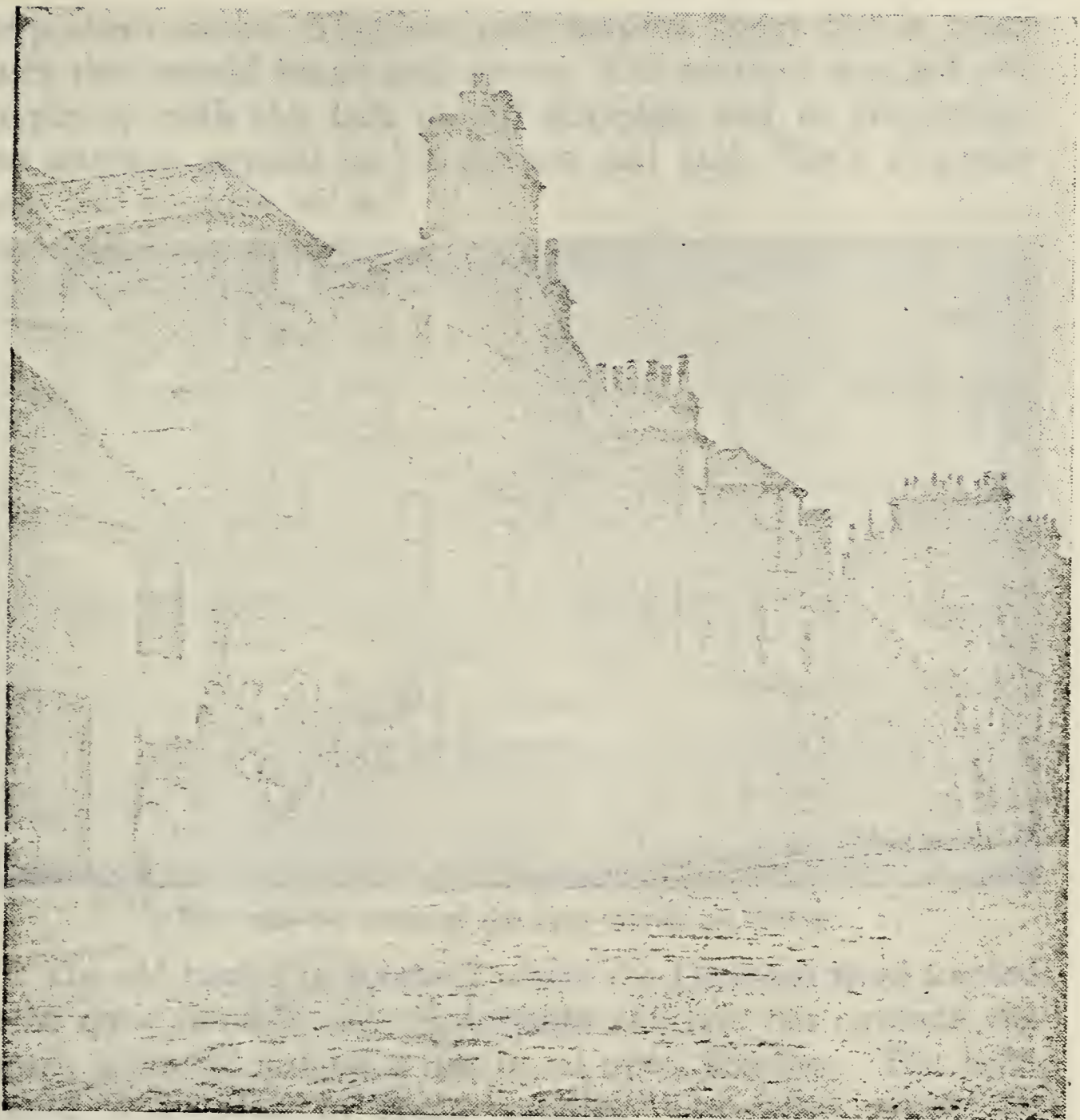
Robert Burns

From all records and letters relating to the Dickson family in Scotland little reference is found to rural life. The family was urban; they were merchants, weavers, tradesmen. When visiting the old home sites and localities they are all urban, few of them seem to have a rural background, perhaps because the area from which they came was an industrial area.

The family worshipped at the Presbyterian church, the church of Scotland. When visiting Edinburgh, one of the places of interest which the visitor is shown is the home of John Knox, born in 1505, a student of the University of Glasgow and founder of the Presbyterian church which was legally established as the State church of Scotland in 1592.

Family life, from every indication, was an affectionate one with respect and consideration for each other. They were kind; we read in an old letter "Alec is fearfully good to his sick wife, like a mother as well as a husband." In some cases there was no outward show of affection, such as kissing. And there was no undue praise; "virtue was its own reward."

These people were frugal and industrious; to them waste was a cardinal sin; because they were thrifty and industrious they could afford to be generous and hospitable. Their homes were open to guests and one felt free to go into the homes of his friends for dinner without the formality of an invitation. The story is told that a Scotsman who came to America wrote that he knew of only two homes where he felt free to go for dinner without being invited.



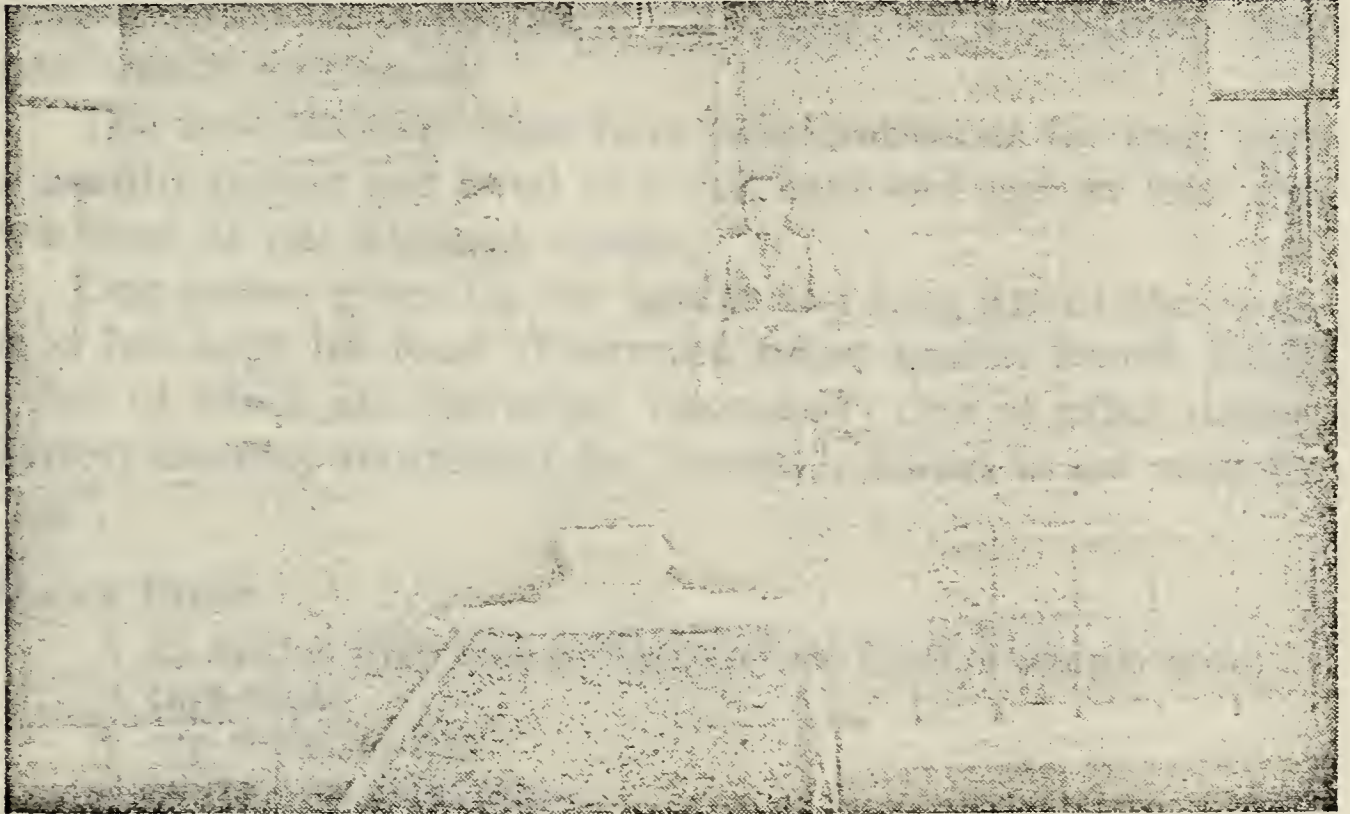
JOHNSTONE - SCOTLAND

The house at the extreme left is the birthplace of some of the Dickson brothers and sisters. The upper window is where Grandmother Sarah Helen Johnstone Dickson sat and sewed.

They were trained to habits of self discipline and self control. They kept their counsel; they might, in modern standards, be considered "close-mouthed". One of their favorite maxims was "Aye keep a wee thing to yersel that ye widna' tell to ony."

They took their church and their God seriously, at the same time enduring the long church service with as much comfort as possible. One aid to endurance was to take a sprig of thyme to church in their Bible. The fragrance of this herb helped to

keep them awake. They not only became sleepy but in many cases they would cough and sneeze. The minister was not one to put up with this lack of self discipline and in one service the minister stopped in his sermon and said, "Let's a' sneeze now and be done wi' it."



This was the home of the Lyle cousins in Paisley.

The old homes in Scotland where the Dicksons lived seemed to be quite durable and comfortable and one can envision the family gathered around a fire in an open fireplace. The light would be supplied by sperm candles. The father would be reading. His four most popular sources of reading would probably be the Bible, Sir Walter Scott's novels, "Bobby" Burns or a newspaper. The children might be playing dominos or Chatter-box, or reading Robinson Crusoe or Gulliver's Travels. The mother might be carding, spinning or weaving the wool into the sturdy fabrics needed for that cold country. Again, because of the fact that they were not a rural people and because of the fact that there were so many weaving industries nearby they may have purchased their fabrics rather than produced their own.

The griddle on the fire could have been used for making scones for tea. Boiling water would always be available for

the customary many cups of tea. The food staple was oat meal or "porridge", as they called it, and it would be cooked for a long time and served in large porridge plates. They might have had fresh salmon and if they did, this would be a dish we might well envy for the salmon coming from those northern waters would be unsurpassed. Of course for a "sweetie" they had Scotch shortbread.

The food they ate must have been nutritious for they were a healthy people and lived to a very ripe old age, at least this was true of our Dickson family.

One reason given for the health and long life of the Scotsman has been his food. There are many typical Scotch foods, a few of which are: porridge, (oatmeal); oats in other dishes; barley; mutton; shortbread for "sweets"; scones to eat with his "tea".

Barley Broth

- 1 lb. mutton from neck or flank and any lamb or mutton bones
- 4 cups water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup barley or less
- 2 tablespoons dried peas
- 1 medium onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup diced carrots
- 1 diced turnip if desired
- 2 tablespoons diced celery, if desired
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper to season

Cook the mutton and bones until tender. Drain off the broth.

Add barley and peas to the broth; cook until done.

About fifteen minutes before the barley and peas are done add the chopped vegetables with the exception of the parsley.

While the vegetables are cooking add the cooked meat either cut in dice or whole; add seasoning and parsley.

This Barley Broth would be the main dish of the meal and of course these amounts would not be sufficient for a Scotch family, and they might not use all the vegetables mentioned.

Oat Cakes

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup oatmeal
- 1 teaspoon fat
- Pinch of salt and a pinch of bi-carbonate of soda

Add salt, soda and fat to the oatmeal

Add hot water to make a stiff paste

Knead and roll out as thin as possible, cut into a round and bake on a moderately hot griddle, turning to bake both sides. Each oat cake will be made separately.

Scones

2 cups flour

4 teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

4 tablespoons butter

1 egg

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup cream or milk; or buttermilk is desirable, in which case add $\frac{1}{6}$ teaspoon soda

Mix and sift the dry ingredients

Work in the butter with a fork

Add milk and beaten egg. Save out a small amount of egg white for the top of the scones.

Toss on floured board; roll $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick, cut in rounds.

Brush the tops with egg white mixed with 1 teaspoon water.

Sprinkle with sugar and bake in a 450 degree oven.

Scotch Short Bread

1 cup butter

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup confectioner's sugar

2 cups bread flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

Add sugar gradually to the butter

Sift the flour, baking powder and salt and work into the sugar and fat.

Shape in a round cake pan, having mixture about $\frac{1}{3}$ inch thick, or shape in an oblong and cut in oblong strips about 3 inches long and $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide.

No meal was complete without saying Grace and two of the popular Graces are:

Grace Before Meat

O Lord when hunger pinches sore,

Do thou stand us in need

And send us from thy bounteous store

A tup or wether head!

Selkirk Grace

Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thanket.

Their habit of drinking tea which persists to this day, may have contributed to their good health for the frequent cups of the hot liquid could have a therapeutic value. Their drinking water may in places have been unsafe and by boiling the water as they did for the tea they may have escaped some water borne contamination. The rest and leisure which accompanied the drinking of the tea would also have a beneficial effect. They literally, almost, drank all day long for they had it upon arising, again for breakfast, in the mid morning, for the mid-day meal again for an afternoon cup then for the evening meal and perhaps again before retiring. We must not lose sight of the fact that Scotland is a cold cloudy country and a hot cup of tea would bring cheer and comfort.

It might be of value to study the health habits of this group of people and arrive at some conclusion; for the present suffice it to say that from the death records there is proof that they were a long lived people and from old letters there are statements showing that they were a healthy people. "She is now in her 85th year and begins to look old, though not her age, but then she has never had any illness in her life." To quote from another letter, "I am pretty well (she was in her eighties) go out every day in all weathers." Our Dicksons who emigrated from Scotland all lived, except Robert and John, who died in their twenties, to their late eighties and their nineties.

These relatives, some of them, loved to dance and the Scotch reel was one of their favorites . . . A description of a Scotch reel which was variously called an "eightsome", a "hool-ichan" or a "Highland fling" is described as follows; "with all the kilts swinging in the breeze with the wearers movements. Wild abandoned leaping snapping fingers exuberant whoops of enjoyment on the part of the male."

Years later after the emigration of the Dicksons to America Cousins George and Grace Lyle wrote from Paisley inviting the American relatives to come to their son's wedding. "I am sure you would enjoy yourselves hearty. Father is practising very hard for the occasion, as he means to make a great hit by singing the Kilbarchen Weaver. And I myself will have to try the Spinning Wheel, and I am sure were it only possible for you to be here you and I would amuse the company by dancing Scotch Reels."

THE SPINNING WHEEL

As I sat at my spinning wheel, A bonnie laddie he passed by;
As I sat at my spinning wheel, A bonnie laddie he passed by,
I turned me round and view'd him weel, For Oh! he had a
glancin' e'e

My panting heart began to feel, But aye I turn'd my spinning
wheel

My panting heart began to feel, But aye I turn'd my spinning
wheel.

My snow-white hands he did extol, He praised my fingers neat
and small;

My snow-white hands he did extol, He praised my fingers neat
and small;

He said there was nae lady fair, That ance wi' me he could
compare;

His words into my heart did steal, But aye I turn'd my spinning
wheel;

His words into my heart did steal, But aye I turn'd my spinning
wheel.

He said, lay by your rock, your reel, Your win'ings and your
spinning wheel;

He said lay by your rock, your reel, Your win'ings and your
spinning wheel;

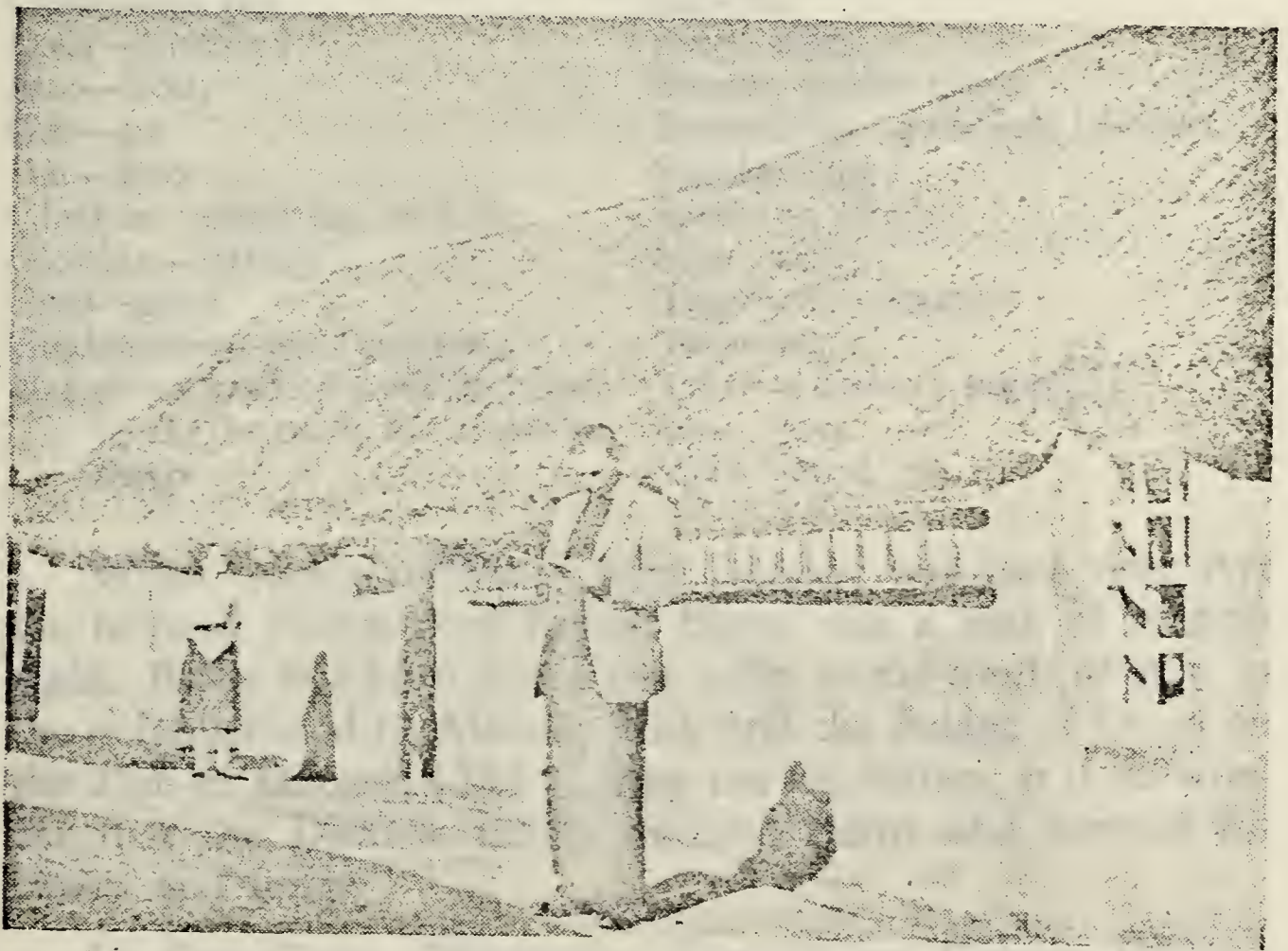
He bade me lay them a' a-side And come and be his bonnie
bride;

And Oh! I liked his words sae weel, I laid aside my spinning wheel;

And Oh! I liked his words sae weel, I laid aside my spinning wheel.

If conversation ever lagged there was always the Edinburgh-Glasgow rivalry for discussion; Edinburgh perhaps more representative of the Aristocracy and Glasgow more of an industrial center. There was rivalry too between the Highlanders and the Lowlanders, with the Highlanders ready to draw sword against the Lowlander.

Present in spirit at every fireside was the beloved poet "Bobby Burns" and the sound of their voices reading and reciting the dialect of Scotland would be music to the ears.



Just outside Ayr is the thatched cottage where Robert Burns was born.

(Courtesy of the British Travel Association)

To those who are unaccustomed to the Scotch dialect, a few of the common words may be interesting. These are words used by Grandfather Dickson when he spoke and when he sang the Scotch songs.

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Amang—among | Ha'pence—half pence |
| Anither—another | Hotch'd—fidgeted |
| Auld—old | Ilk—each |
| Awa—away | Ken—know |
| Bairns—children | Laddie—a lad |
| Bannock—an oatmeal bread | Lanely—lonely |
| Barm—yeast | Lang—long |
| Blethers—nonsense | Mair—more |
| Brash—sickness | Mauna—must not |
| Braw—handsome | Mither—mother |
| Brig—bridge | Muckie—great, big, much |
| But an' ben—kitchen and parlour | Needna—need not |
| Canna—cannot | Oursel—ourselves |
| Couldna—could not | Pladie—plaid |
| Craw—to crow | Porridge—cereal, usually oatmeal |
| Daft—foolish | Roon—round |
| Dinna—do not | Sae—so |
| Dour—stubborn | Sang—song |
| Frae—from | Scones—barley cakes |
| Gae—go | Sculdudd'ry—grossness, baseness |
| Gie—give | Shanks—legs |
| Gloamin—gloaming, twilight | Speel—to climb |
| Glowran—staring | Syne—since |
| Guid—good | Tippence—twopence |
| Guidmornin—good morning | Twa—two |
| Haggis—a kind of pudding baked in the stomach of a cow or sheep | Tyke—a country bumpkin |
| | Vera—very |
| | Vittle—food |

When Greatgrandfather John Dickson was born near Ayr the beloved Scotch poet Robert Burns was a man of twenty-eight. Burns was born about two miles to the south of Ayr, in the neighborhood of Alloway Kirk and the Bridge of Doon on the 25th of January, 1759. Living not too distant, it is no wonder that the Dickson family idolized Burns and learned his poems and songs.

In Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Grandfather George Dickson would entertain the audience of the Congregational Church in the Ninth Ward, then the sixth Ward, by singing and reciting the Burns songs and poems. They would take his rocking chair, place it on the rostrum then seat the old gentleman in the chair. The effect of the flowing grey beard, the Scotch "burr", the

native dialect, the love for the poems and ballads was to the listener a never to be forgotten experience.

A few passages from some of his favorites remind us of the deep place Burns had in the hearts of his countrymen who drew hope, comfort, companionship and pleasure from his words.

Although the Dickson family was an urban family their home life was enough like that of the cottager or farmer to make them very responsive to the "Cotters' Saturday Night."

THE COTTERS' SATURDAY NIGHT

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The healsome parritch, chief of Scotia's food:
The soupe their only Hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood;
The dame brings forth in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel—hain'dkebbuck fell,
An' aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wife, garrulous will tell,
How 'twas a townmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible ance his father's pride;
His bonnet rev'rantly is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains tha once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And 'Let us worship God!' he says with solemn air.

Burns, while a national favorite, possessed more than the average of human weaknesses. He had financial troubles; he was a hard drinker; and his affairs with women were fodder for the local gossips. Because of, or in spite of, his human frailties the people loved him as few writers have been loved.

Many of the letters he wrote carry news of the Ayr locality. One of the men to whom he wrote frequently was a Robert Muir. As the Dicksons and Muirs are cousins some of these letters may be of interest.

My Dear Friend:

I have just time for the carrier, to tell you that I received your letter; of which I shall say no more but what a lass of my acquaintance said of her bastard wean; she said she did na kenn wha was the father exactly but she suspected it was some of thae bonny blackguard smugglers, for it was like them." So I only say your obliging epistle was like you. I enclose you a parcel of subscription bills. Your affair of sixty copies is also like you; but it would not be like me to comply.

Your friend's notion of my life has put a crochet in my head of sketching in some future epistle to you. My compliments to Charles and Mr. Parker. R.B.

The letters of Burns show how easily the Scotch people could make the language shift from dialect to formal English.

Burns' mention of Stirling, Wallace, Bannockburn and Bruce are in keeping with the esteem the people of the Glasgow area felt for their National heroes.

Stirling, 26th August, 1787

My Dear Sir,

I intended to have written you from Edinburgh, and now write you from Stirling to make an excuse. Here am I, on my way to Inverness, with a truly original, but very worthy man, a Mr. Nicol, one of the masters of the High-school in Edinburgh. I left Auld Reckie yesterday morning, and have passed, besides by-excursions, Linlithgow, Borrowstounes, Falkirk, and here I am undoubtedly. This morning I knelt at the tomb of Sir John the Graham, the gallant friend of the immortal Wallace; and two hours ago I said a fervent prayer for Old Caledonia over the hole in a blue whinstone where Robert de Bruce fixed his royal standard on the banks of Bannockburn; and just now from Stirling Castle, I have seen by the setting sun the glorious prospect of the windings of Forth through the rich carse of Stirling, and skirting the equally rich carse of Falkirk. The crops are very strong, but so very late that there is no harvest, except a ridge or two perhaps in ten miles all the way I have travelled from Edinburgh.

I left Andrew Bruce and family all well. I will be at least three weeks in making my tour, as I shall return by the coast, and have many people to call for.

My best compliments to Charles, our dear kinsman and fellow saint; and Messrs. W. and H. Parkers. I hope Hughe is going on and prospering with God and Miss M'Causlin.

If I could think on anything sprightly, I should let you hear every other post; but a dull matter-of-fact business like this scrawl, the less and seldomer one writes, the better.

Among other matters-of-fact I shall add this, that I am and ever shall be,

My dear Sir,
Your obliged
R.B.

Mossiel, 7th March, 1788

Dear Sir,

I have partly changed my ideas, my dear friend, since I saw you. I took old Glenconner with me to Mr. Miller's farm; and he was so pleased with it, that I have wrote an offer to Mr. Miller, which if he accepts, I shall sit down a plain farmer—the happiest of lives when a man can live by it. In this case I shall not stay in Edinburgh above a week. I set out on Monday and would have come by Kilmarnock but there are several small sums owing me for my first edition about Gaston and Newmills, and I shall set so early as to dispatch my business and reach Glasgow by night. When I return I shall devote a forenoon or two to make some kind of acknowledgement for all the kindness I owe your friendship. Now that I hope to settle with some credit and comfort at home, there was not any friendship or friendly correspondence that promised me more pleasure than yours; I hope I will not be disappointed. I trust the spring will renew your shattered frame, and make your friends happy. You and I have often agreed that Life is no great blessing, on the whole. The close of life, indeed, to a reasoning age, is

“Dark as was Chaos, ere the infant sun
Was rolled together, or had tried his beams
Athwart the gloom profound.”

But an honest man has nothing to fear. If we lie down in the grave, the whole man a piece of broken machinery, to moulder with the clods of the valley, be it so; at least there is an end of pain, care, woes, and wants: If that part of us called mind does survive the apparent destruction of the man—away with old wife prejudices and tales! Every age and every nation has had a different set of stories; and as the many are always weak, of consequence they have often, perhaps always been deceived. A man conscious of having acted an honest part among his fellow creatures—even granting he may have been the sport at times

of passions and instincts—he goes to a great unknown Being, who could have no other end in giving him existence but to make him happy; who gave him those instincts and passions, and well knows their force.

These, my worthy friend, are my ideas; and I know they are not far different from yours. It becomes a man of sense to think for himself, particularly in a case where all men are equally interested, and where indeed, all men are equally in the dark.

Adieu, my dear Sir. God send us a cheerful meeting!

—R.B.

Glossary of some of the words used in the quotations from Burn's poems.

A-gley—off the right line

Bickering—a wooden dish; a few steps unwittingly

Bield—shelter

Blastit—blasted, with red

Brattle—a short race

Gin—if

Haffets—temples

Hain'd—spared

Hallan—partition wall

Hawkie—cow

Lebbuck—a cheese

Lint—flax

Lyart—grey

Parritch—oatmeal cooked in water

Stoure—dust

Tup—a ram

Wales—choice

Weans—children

Weel—well

Whins—furze bushes

Wonner—awonder

One of the family stories which gave them much amusement was of "the two would be wags who invited the poet Burns to supper. Two small dishes of common fare were produced and Burns was asked to say a Grace in verse. He did so at once in these lines:

'Oh Thou Who blest the loaves and fishes

Look down upon these twa bit dishes

An' tho the tatties be bit sma!

Lord, make them plenty for us a'

But if our stomachs they will fill

Twill be another miracle.'

And now these people with their distinctive characteristics, their "dourness", their strong determination, their thrifty habits are leaving their native land, a bleak, cold, misty country, hoping to find in America a better life for their children.

The eldest son, Robert, was the first of the family to migrate to America. He went in October 1835 when he was twenty-one and had married a Scotch "lassie", Agnes Crow. From America he writes to his family telling them about this new country, about his work and about living conditions.

This Robert was one of the "lost brothers" of whom more will be said later. He must have been quite an unusual young man. He left a son, Stephen, who may have lived and had children. These descendants, if there are any, should take great pleasure in reading these letters.

The next brother George came in 1836. He came over on a sailing vessel and it took him thirteen weeks to make the trip. He may have come on the Patrick Henry which made the slowest crossing of the packet ships. This was an 89 day trip.

This letter was addressed to;

Mr. John Dickson
Weaver

No. 50 High Street
Johnstone By Paisley

West of Scotland

New York, Sept. 24th, 1836

My Dear Father

Doubtless you will be anxious to hear of Your Son, and how America is using him.

I am still enjoying excellent health, and like the country well. The weather has been exceedingly cold, this Summer, Cold to the Yankees, but I assure you, not cold to us Emigrants, The summer however, has been much colder than usual. It is reported in the News Papers, that about the beginning of Sep. there had been Frost up in the interior of the country, that had destroyed the orchards very much. There is on this account much of the provisions being very dear this winter. I have often heard you say that the climate of America was very healthy, having a clear sky, dry and regular weather.

I shall as far as I am able, give you a description of the climate, and my opinion of its Health. I have now experienced a winters cold, most of a summers Heat, When I arrived in this country it was the 25th Oct. At that time of the year the weather begins to cool, after I came we had really excellent weather to about New Year. dry and clear, much

like our summer in Scotland, with the exception of the nights being colder, the fall and the Spring is doubtless the best wether and the healthiest of the Whole Year, after the New Year, the Cold becomes excessive, the snow having fallen to the depth of from 2 to 3 feet, the rivers are all frozen. Sledges are used instead of Carts and carriages. during the winter, as long as the snow lies on the ground. Last winter was a very long one. The cold severer than had been experienced for 7 years before, it was as cold as 15 degrees below zero. You never experienced any cold like to what it is here. The wether begins to get warmer about the end of May or Commencement of June. The Heat of the Summer runs to as great an extremety, often as high as 110 Deg. Generally between 90 and 100 is common, The people wear light cloths, linnen jackets or roundabout as they call them here light cotton Pantaloons, what you call trousers. Merchants and Gentlemen, have long coats same as the light one I took with me. Sometimes the wether changes very suddenly from Heat to cold, it is in general clear and an Unclouded and Beautifull sky. The People are in general Pale, and thin of Flesh. Particularly the Females. There are a great many deaths by Consumption, stomach complaints, are very general. Despepsia is a very common one. A Dentist does well, whereas the People very soon lose their teeth. It is my opinion they lose them from the use of so much fruit. I see very few old people here. They don't live to so great an age, and are sooner at maturity. A girl is fit for mariage at 13 or 14 years, it is much healthier among our friends in Vermont.

I will now say a little about House rent, provisions and clothing, in York you will pay, for such a House as you live in. About 60 dollars Per Year, for one apartment without a bedroom. from 40 to 50 dollars rent are exceeding high; up in the country, rents are a great deal less, I have talked with men who have lived in country towns. Weavers who have told me the country was the place for a Weaver, you will get as good a house int the country for 30 dol. as you will get in New York for 60 or 70 dol. The same with Provisions, which are very high at York, Fresh Beef 1 shilling to 15 pence per pound 6 to 7½ sterling. Pork ditto. Butter 2 shillings and 2 pence 13 pence sterling per lb. cheese 1 shilling 6 pence sterling per lb. Eggs 1 shilling sterling per dozen. Flour 10 dolers per Barrel, Potatoes ½ doler per Bushel, coffee 9 pence sterling per lb. Green Tea 6 shillings per lb. Sugar 6 sterling per lb. Fruit is very cheap ½ dol. pr. bushel peaches are selling at, you will get a Hatfull for 6 or 8 cents, Apples 6 Sterling per peck, English, Mellons cucumbers, Squash and a great deal of other fruit is very cheap. Corn meal is Cheap. I do not know the price of it, I have not got any of it since I came to the Country, it is only used by the poorest classes. Clothing—People mostly buy ready made, 2 jacets or roundabout linen pretty fine, 2 prs of pantaloons are cheap, great variety of Color (*This

word is torn) manuf. different ways which wear well to 3½ Dollars a Pair, Satinet Pantaloon & Woolen, great variety of patterns striped Che (*the word is torn) and they cost from 4 to 6 Dol. Pr Pair, Cassimere 5 & 6 Dol. Cloths 8 to 10 Dol. for a coat suit Brown 20 Dolar Cloth for Coating is very dear (*This last word is partly missing.) Tailors charge 8 dollars for making and mounting (*Last word uncertain). a long coat, 10 for a Surtout, Cotton shirting is cheaper than at home, Shoes 1¼ Dolars Pr Pair 5 shillings Per. Boots from 2 to 5 Dolars, an excellent for 2¾ Dol. 11 Shillings. sterling

Trade—The Stock weaving has been very dull—no demand, I have still been employed. I mentioned in some of my letters, that I had left Mr. Davies and engaged with Messers Mulholland & Long, I engaged to do their business & be paid for the time employed & to weaving over time for my own account, in this manner I have been doing since May, my wages about 8 Dollars Pr week, Mr. Davies wanted me to come back to him at 7 dollars per week. I would not take this offer as I am with men of better Principles & Pleasanter to serve. About a month ago a gentleman keeps the village hotel beside us offered to give me the management of a Refectory, and would make me a partner by allowing so much stock as my share, Spirits were to be sold. I declined accepting his offer. Thus father I have given you a brief account, of anything which I thought would be of interest to you. I have enquired much after Mr. Arnot, have heard nothing of him, nothing of my uncle since the letter I received informing me wher to leave the present I had brought for him, a person from that place was in York, who was returning, with whom I sent the presents. I requested him to write when he received them, I have got no word since.

Remember me to all friends Thomas Donald, R.&A. Smith, Mary Lang, Mother and father and Sisters, Mr. Bontin & if you walk over to Clip-pens, you will likely see some of the "Craws" Flying about you. Tell them I'd like to herry one of their nests. I must stop or I'll write on the back too.

Your Dutifull son R. Dickson

Respects to Mother, hoping she will remember me to little Agnes Tommy and Mary, Bauldy (Archibald) and York and Favorite Geordy; ½ past 12, I still like my bed, time I was in it. R. Dickson

herry—means to destroy

craw—means crow

The prices of the provisions mentioned in the letter are sometimes given in American terms and sometimes in British terms.

Pence—plural of pennies

Penny—British coin equal to about 1/12 of a shilling or about 2 cts. American money.

Shilling—1/20 of a pound sterling or 12 pence

Pound—20 shillings or about \$4.87

William IV (the third son of George III) was King of England at this time, 1831 to 1837, and the next year, 1837, Victoria came to the throne. William died in June, 1837; perchance if he had died earlier in the year, the possibility of a new ruler might have made the Dicksons more contented in Scotland.

Andrew Jackson was President of the United States and Martin VanBuren was the next President. (1837 to 1841)

These letters bear no postage stamps; they were usually sent by some individual; when sent by post, the fees were excessively heavy. The postage could be paid by either the sender or the person to whom the letter was sent. The first postage label was produced by the British Post Office in 1840. They were first produced in the United States in 1847.

In the period when the John Dickson of Scotland lived, factory employment was the profession for groups relatively high in the social status; these skilled operators who mastered their craft in Scotland and emigrated to America easily found employment in the New World.

CHAPTER IV

THE EMIGRATION TO A NEW WORLD

"Lang may be your lum reek"

(Long may your chimney smoke, or long may ye be happy.)

Times were bad in Great Britain; as a result people were looking for a better life and were emigrating in large numbers; seeking a new world where they could fulfill their dreams of owning land and living a freer life.

George IV who was the ruler from 1820 to 1830 was "loathed and despised", and during the reign of William IV, 1830 to 1837 "everywhere misery and discontent were apparent."

It was April 19, 1837 when John and his family left their home land. All of their children had been born in Scotland, at Ayr, Glasgow, Paisley, or Johnstone.

The children of John Dickson and Sarah Helen Johnstone Dickson were:

Robert—born August 12, 1815; died at Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Oct. 16, 1840. He left a son Stephen

George—born at Ayr, Jan. 27, 1817; died at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, May 5, 1902

John—born Oct. 1818; died at Portland, Maine, March 18, 1856. He left two children, John or Alexander; Jessie or Sarah Helen. In one letter John said that he had named his children after his father and mother; in a letter at the time of John's death the children were called Jessie and Alexander. John's wife probably had parents too and she evidently wanted the privilege of naming her children. You may see here the feeling which existed between the Scotch and English for John's wife may have been English as John was working in England.

Archibald—born over the Black Bull Tavern in Glasgow, Sept. 6, 1820; died Oct. 4, 1911 at Waneka, Wisconsin.

Mary—born June 10, 1824, at Paisley; died Jan. 10, 1910, at Waneka, Wisconsin

Thomas—born Aug. 22, 1828; died Jan. 16, 1899, at Waneka

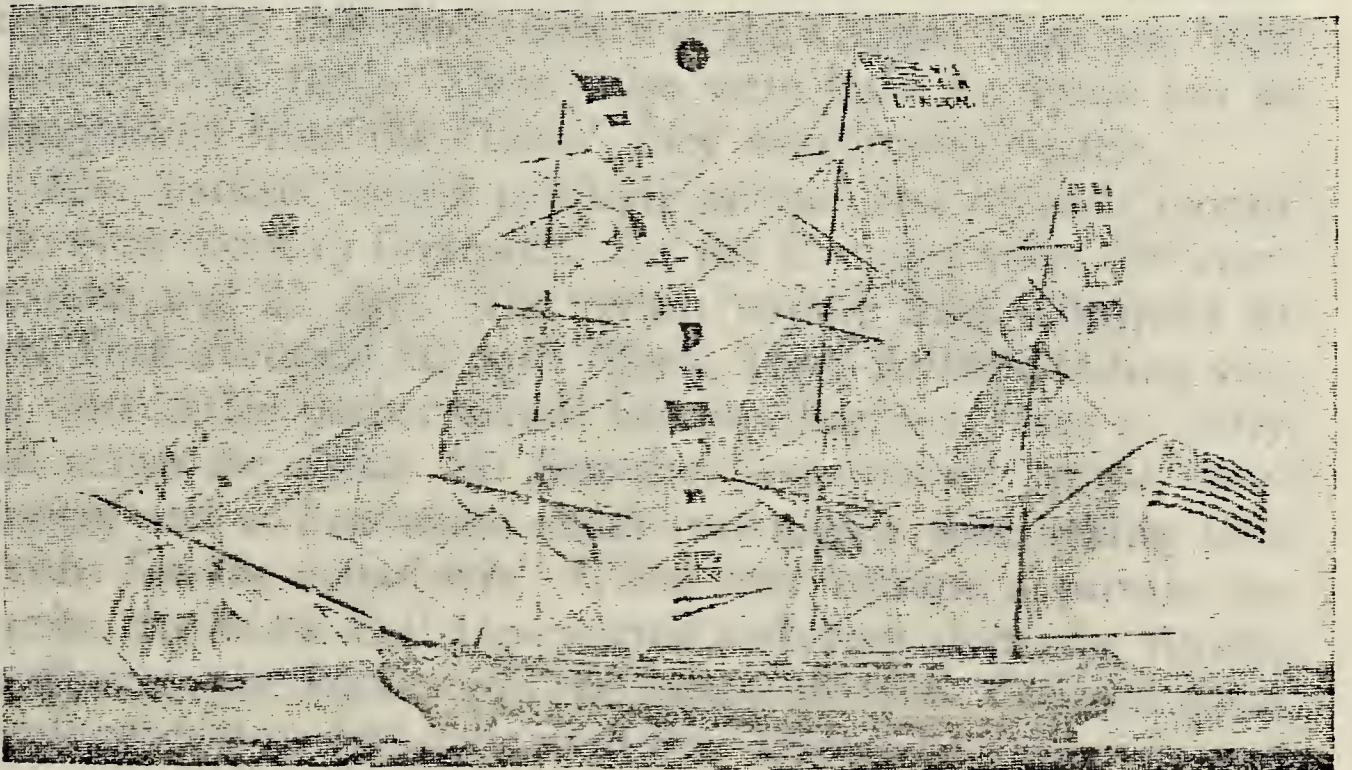
Agnes—born March 2, 1832; died March 23, 1919

The two eldest sons, Robert and George were already in America, Robert having gone in 1835, and George in 1836. And the son John was to come later. The family thus consisted of the father, a man about 49 years of age, the mother and four children; Archibald the oldest of the four was 17 years of age and Agnes the youngest was 5 years old.

Robert had married Agnes Crow a girl from his native area and he was working in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. George found work in various towns in America. At one time he worked with his brother Robert and lived in his home.

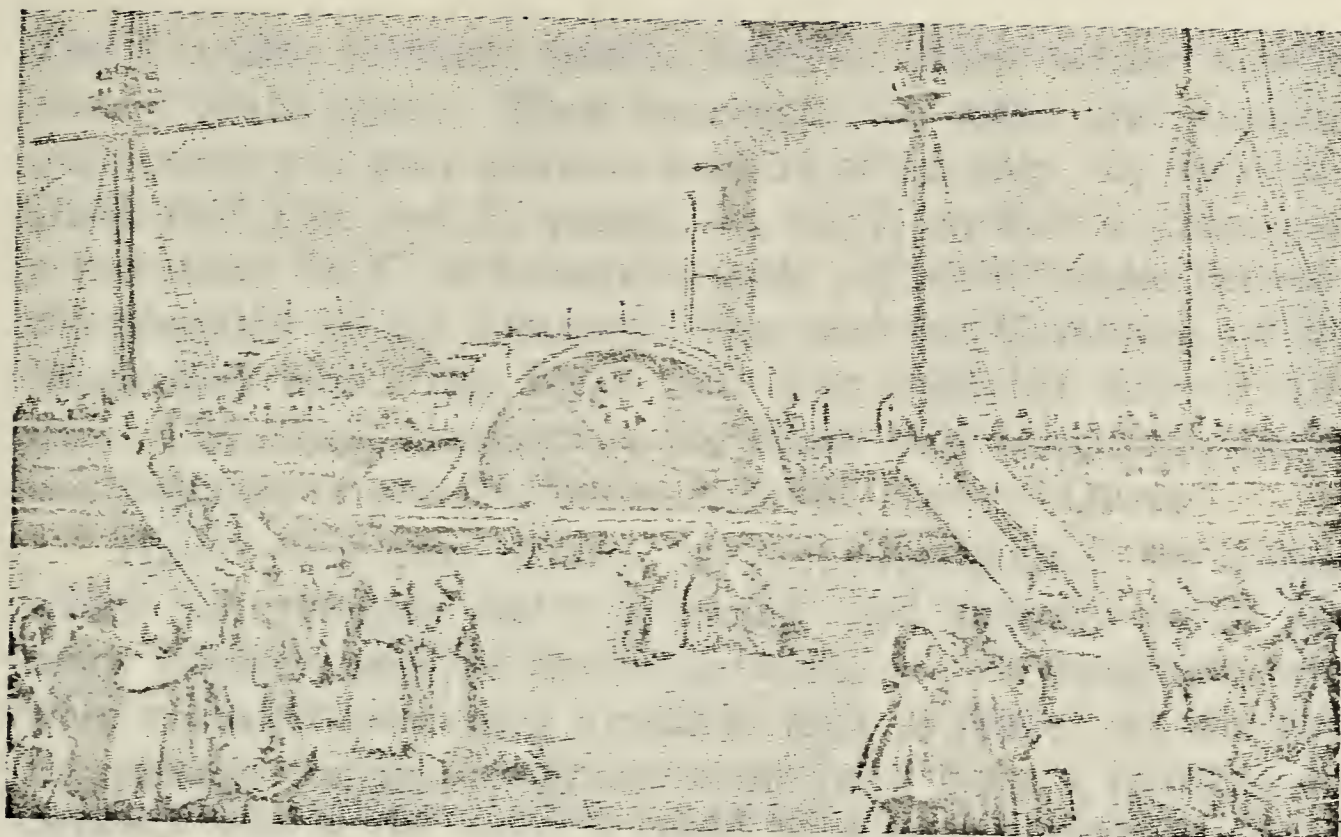
The period from 1830 to 1846 was a period of greatly increased emigration. The number of passengers on the boats was five times the number of emigrants of the previous decade. In 1837 there were 106 emigrants from Scotland; 10 males and 4 women of these 106 were born in Scotland. Two of these were weavers and spinners.

The father, John, and family came on a sailing vessel called the "Tropic", a ship belonging to the Black Ball line. This was the era of the "packet" ships. The Black Ball line founded by Isaac Wright & Son and Charles H. Marshall began



The Packet Ship Liverpool is similar to and of the same period as the "Tropic", the packet ship on which the Dicksons came to America.

Courtesy of the State St. Trust Co., Boston, Mass.



This was one of the first Cunard steamships; the first Cunarder crossed in 1840 three years after the Dicksons left Scotland. This shows how they took animals on board to add to the food supply.

Courtesy of the Cunard Steamship Co.

in 1818 to sail regularly these boats of 400 to 500 tons from Liverpool to America carrying passengers, mail, and valuable freight. About this time there was the Clipper Ship era from about 1840 to 1855. These ships were built for speed but as distinguished from the "Lines" they were tramp vessels.

The "packets" sailed regularly on the first of each month from New York to Liverpool. For the first nine years the average time was 23 days. The return voyage from Liverpool to New York averaged 40 days. These Trans-Atlantic sailing vessels were called packet vessels because they were used to carry mail across the ocean. At first they were owned by the Government and at first made about two trips a year, taking four months for the round trip. When they became a private enterprise, the Black Ball Line started with four ships, the Amity, the Courier, the Pacific, and the James Monroe. Contrast these vessels of 400 or 500 tons with the "Queens" of today having a tonnage of 85,000 tons.

It has been said the Black Ball Line more than any other movement brought fame and prosperity to the United States.

The Captains of these vessels were the finest whose services money could secure. They were men of social and financial importance and were absolute masters of the ship. By 1850 the Black Ball Line had 25 vessels. In 1837, on Feb. 2, there was a race from N. Y. to Liverpool with a \$10,000 stake between the Sheridan of the Dramatic Line and the Columbus of the Black Ball Line. The Black Ball won with her ship of 597 tons. The fastest crossings of the Black Ball Line were the 16 day passages of the Yorkshire and the Harvest Queen.

There were two choices of accommodations, the cabins which were elegant and comfortable and included meals and many luxuries, and the accommodations for the emigrants who were crowded into every available inch of space. At the best the passage for the emigrants must have been a horrible experience and at the worst it could have been a tragedy, for, if a family failed to take sufficient food or to estimate its needs, members could actually starve as many did.

These trips were made twice a month and were in such demand that more and more vessels were built. It became a great event in New York to go to the dock and watch the departure of the little ships flying the red swallow tail flag with its black ball in the center and a black ball painted on the top sail. 1830 a Black Ball advertisement quoted the fare as being thirty-five guineas for each adult which included wine and everything necessary on the boat. This would make the fare about \$80. In 1830 passage, as quoted in another source, was \$180. In 1832 one quotation was 616 shillings.

The voyage on which the Dicksons came took six weeks. For a family of six this meant provisions for seven hundred and fifty-six individual meals. Whether the family came cabin class or came as emigrants is not known.

In 1848 the Law required each ship to have on deck one camboose or cooking range, 4 ft. long 1ft. 6-in. wide, for every 200 passengers. This was eleven years after the Dicksons came across the Atlantic.

Try to imagine what it must have been like to have to carry on to the boat and to cook in a primitive manner the

provisions for these many meals. Each family had to cook its own meals, either at the cook's galley or on the deck. When they cooked on deck they must have had to use a cook stove, a charcoal burner or a spirit lamp. There was no dehydrated nor condensed milk, no dried eggs nor concentrated fruit juices, no tin canned foods, no electricity, no refrigeration. All that the emigrants received for the price of their tickets was passage and water. And on these small boats there were from 400 to 1000 passengers and their livestock.

The live stock provided a source of food for the emigrants. The decks were a farmyard with pens of pigs, sheep, ducks, geese and hens. The pens for the sheep and pigs were at the bottom, the ducks, geese and hens were on a deck laid across the gunwale. The cow house was lashed over the main deck. In many cases the jolly boats contained boxes filled with dirt in which the Captain had planted a kitchen garden. The jolly boats which were used for gardens were small boats used for rough work around the larger boat.

The cabins were lighted by deck sky lights. Other illumination on the boat was provided by candles and whale oil lamps.

These little ships that were at the mercy of the winds and weather were fraught with danger from within as well as from without. The close quarters, the many passengers, and the restricted sanitary facilities were conducive to the spread of communicable disease. The danger of fires from the cooking stoves was a very real hazard.

In June, 1831 a British ship arrived in New York with 200 passengers of whom 112 were down with small pox and five had died on the voyage.

BLOW THE MAN DOWN

As in all phases of history, the songs the people sing are indicative of their joys and their hardships. A "chantey" is a song sung by sailors in rhythm with their motions while working. One of the chanteys which the Dicksons were likely to have heard on their six week's crossing was the Chantey, "Blow the Man Down".

Oh Blow the man down, bullies, knock him right down
Way—ay, blow the man down!

Oh blow the man down, bullies, knock him right down,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

As I was walking down Paradise street
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
A brass bound policeman, I chanced for to meet,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

I hailed him in English, and hailed him all round
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy! O'—where are you bound?
Give me some time to blow the man down.

A watching the damsels so gay and so young,
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
It's arm-in-arm we strolled round the town
Give me some time to blow the man down.

Oh policeman, policeman please come along,
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
I'm a flying fish sailor just home from Hong Kong,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

There was an old skipper, I don't know his name
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
Although he once played a remarkable game
Give me some time to blow the man down.

For his ship lay becalmed with tropical seas
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
And he whistled all day but in vain, for a breeze
Give me some time to blow the man down.

But a seal heard his whistle and loudly did call
To my aye, aye, blow the man down!
Roll up your white canvas jibs, spanker and all
Give me some time to blow the man down.

In 1835 the Black Ball Line was acquired by Capt. Chas. H. Marshall an old Nantucket sailing man. In the Spring of 1837 the U. S. Government imposed a landing tax of \$10 on every immigrant. Previously the tax was only twenty cents. In 1837 the Diamond arrived in New York in February having been 100 days out. It left Liverpool with 180 passengers; 17 died on the way of starvation. Those who had managed to save a little food demanded appalling prices. A sovereign had been

offered and denied for one potato. One man lived for nine days on the potato peelings he had managed to find.

This was the same year that the Dickson family came over on the Tropic on their six week's trip. Sailing had its difficulties for the crew as well as for the passengers. The chanty "Blow the Man Down" was written in tribute to the Black Ball officers who sailed twice a month regardless of the weather. The sailors were subject to punishment unique to their occupation. "Belaying pin soup" and "Handspike Hash" were introduced for mutinous and slothful mariners.

Many of the fast packets were luxurious as were the provisions for the Cabin class passengers on all the boats. They provided excellent food, entertainment, a band for dancing, and concerts; they offered plays, mock trials debating and choral societies, quoits, deck billiards, dominoes, backgammon and other games.

The beginning of the end of the packet ships came when on April 23, 1835, the first steamer, The Great Western crossed the Atlantic.

When the Dickson family arrived in New York they stayed at the Black Ball Hotel. They were in New York, which was then a city of about two million, from May 31, when they arrived, until September. The father John may have secured work there or he may have gone directly to Vermont. In September son Robert who was living in Poughkeepsie wrote that he would go to New York to see that the family got started on its way to Vermont.

To Mrs. Dickson
Care of Donald M. Robbie
Black Bull

8th Avenue between 18th and 19th St.,
New York

Dear Mother

Pokeepsie 30th 1837

I have just received a letter from my Father and am happy to inform you they are all well, You are to be at Albany on the 6th Sept., which is Wednesday, I will come down and help you off. I will leave Pokeepsie on Sunday night and be at New York Monday Morning. You must be preparing as you will have to leave New York on Tues-

day. John Gibson will be waiting for you there. I think George need not quit work till Monday night. Save as much as you can.

My father says in his letter that his friends think he will do well in Vermont when he has his family beside him. I hope you are all in good spirits and will leave N. York without a sigh. You will find plenty to *eat* at least in the country, and some clothing too, you will at all events be better in the country this winter than any where I know.

You may expect me on Monday morning.

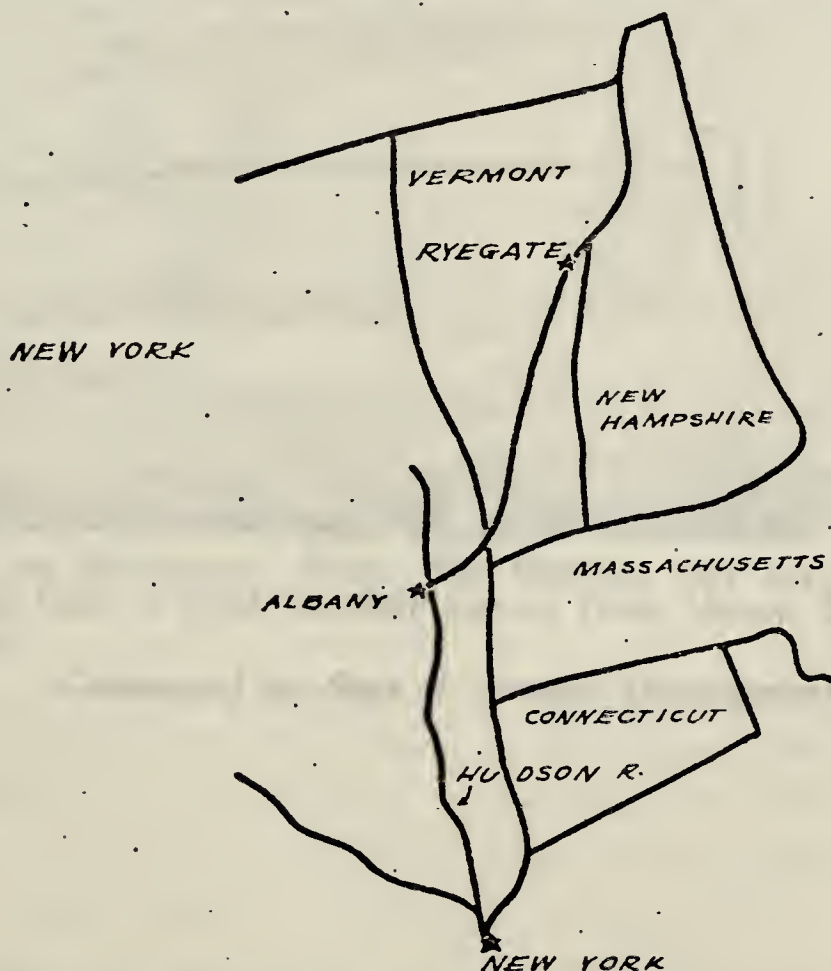
No more at Present but remain

Your Dutiful Son

R. Dickson

P.S. Agnes is in good health. She desires me to send you her best respects, along with hers accept of mine.

On this Sept. Tuesday the Dickson family, which left home nearly five months ago, travelled up the Hudson by steamer to Albany where they were to be met by the uncle John Gibson and go by wagon or stage coach to Ryegate, Vermont. It would bring a sigh of relief to the mother to get her four children into a home of their own after these many weeks.



In 1837 the John Dickson family crossed the Atlantic, tarried for a few months in New York then left by boat for Albany; and from there by land to Ryegate, Vermont, which was to be their home for nearly eighteen years.



Bridge over the Welloomsoc River. The Dicksons may have crossed this bridge, which was built in 1832, on their journey from Albany, New York to Ryegate, Vermont.

Courtesy of the State of Vermont Development Commission

CHAPTER V

THE VERMONT YEARS

The trip to Vermont was made by boat on the Hudson River to Albany; the R.R. connection between New York and Albany was not established until 1851 when the Hudson River Railroad was completed. From Albany to Vermont they must have travelled by stage or gone across the state by stage and then up the Connecticut river. This must have been a journey of 200 miles or more. By 1840 the New England states had various railroads but probably not in 1837.

Now the family is settled in Vermont near the Newbury line on land later owned by A. W. Whitelaw. Their town is Ryegate a solid old Scotch town in Caledonia County. Caledonia means Scotland so they must have felt less strange here.

This was in 1837; Van Buren was President. It was all very rural then, no gas, no electricity, not even kerosene oil; each family had of necessity to be sufficient unto itself.

These Vermont years, about 17 of them, from 1837 until 1855 may have been rather barren years. They surely missed the many cousins they had back in Scotland and the good fellowship which prevailed there. During this time two of the older sons died, Robert who had taken so much responsibility for his family died at Poughkeepsie at the age of 25. He left a son Stephen and widow, Agnes Crow Dickson whom he had married in Scotland; it is this son and the children of Robert's brother John who died at Portland, Maine, who have been lost to the Dickson family and who have never been located in spite of much effort on the part of the Wisconsin Dicksons.

The brother John who died at Portland, Maine in 1856 left a widow and two children. John had married in England or Scotland and his two children were born there. In a letter which is included later, to his parents he writes that he has named his son for his father and his daughter for his mother. These children would be John and Sarah Dickson, or Alexander and Jessie as they are called in a later letter.

Robert was a good letter writer and many of his letters are included in this story. He felt a keen responsibility, perhaps because he was the eldest son, for his family and his interest did not cease when the Dicksons reached Vermont. By correspondence he continued to advise and encourage them.

These letters are a true affirmation of Robert's devotion to his family for letter writing in those days was a very expensive activity. If Robert on his salary of six dollars per week paid about twenty cents for one page that would consume one thirtieth of his week's income. From 1816 to 1847 the scale charged for letters consisting of one piece of paper and not going over 30 miles was 6 cents; not going over 80 miles was 10 cents; not over 150 miles was $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents and not over 400 miles was $18\frac{3}{4}$ cents. For greater distances the cost was 25 cents. For over two sheets the charge was doubled. The postage was collected entirely in money and could be prepaid or collected at the destination. On the envelopes of these old letters is stamped the word "paid" and sometimes the amount of the postage is given. In 1847 the United States introduced stamps in 5 and 10 cent denominations with the faces of Franklin and Washington respectively.

Your respect for this young man increases when you realize that he is only 24 years old with the responsibilities of a young husband; yet he takes the time and money to write at length to his parents and brothers and sisters in Vermont.

Pokeepsie Nov 18 1837

My Dear Father

Yours of the 26th Oct came duly to hand, I am happy to hear that you are all well, and getting along, I expected a letter long ago, as I was very anxious to hear of how the Family got to Vermont, indeed I am much dissatisfied, for after I have received a Letter, it is not a 4th Part of one, when the distance is so great, our writing so seldom, I would like to have more than *one Page*. I expected to have got a *Letter* full, of many Particulars, of which I am still uninformed on. I hope that you will be more Particular in Future, I will commence another *subject*—I am still engaged in the *Carpet Factory*, and have now got the *management*, as Mr. Douglass is going to *South America* he and his Family to *Lalta*, 1300 miles in the interior from Buenos

Aires, Mr. Port may leave too, he is going to start *Manufacturing Carpets* there; not having had a previous knowledge of this *Business*, together with the bad times, my wages are in Consequence small I am to have 6 dollars pr. week, and then in another to have 7—the greatest advantage is, I am gaining a knowledge of this *Business* which will perhaps be yet for my good. I have had a great deal of *spite* and *ill will*, by those engaged but, we have discharged a good many of malicious persons, I am not altogether satisfied but will pass the winter with him if Possible, I hear that you expected to get into a *Wooling Factory*, but that it had stopped, I am sorry it did not go on. it would have been a good plan for you, and the Family, I hope we will have better times, and I have no doubt we will, if labor and industry all get good situations, if we are not *steady* and *good, honest men* we don't deserve them. You informed me you have written to Scotland I have also wrote to Mr. Crow & my old companion John Buntin, I have received no letters from Scotland since I came to Pokeepsie, this I think is strange, but I cannot account for it, as soon as I receive any information I will let you know the particulars. With regard to the times they are very dull with us, I hear they are improving a little in New York. It is expected there will be a change when the Whig administration get into office. They had a great majority in Pokeepsie, after what there was a great, illumination, and Rejoicing, several Barrels of Beer going to the People. On the Banks of the River they had bon fires and every steam boat that arrived from New York or Albany were Saluted by a Volley. The people are in expectation of great things. We will see. I must now conclude, but a word more. I wonder why you have not mentioned of our friends. In Vermont in particular, of your sister my Aunt, and Mr. Gibson. You never mention if they are dead or alive. Remember me to them sincerely. They have been good friends to me. I am happy to hear of my mother's Health. Agnes and I both send our deepest respect to her. To the children and yourself I would like to be near, to see how little Thomas and Agnes, behave. I trust they will yet show a pattern to their elder sister and brothers. We are both in good Health, Remember us affectionately to all our Friends.

Your Affectionate Son & Daughter
Agnes & Robert Dickson

At times the loyalty to family ties became a little strained as for example Robert was not too pleased because his brother George wanted to come to work in Poughkeepsie and live with Robert and his wife. On Robert's salary of six dollars a week, providing a room, and food for a third person would be a very

expensive proposition. You get the feeling too (whether justly or not) that George is not as "steady" a young man as Robert, and this would worry Robert.

Mr. John Dickson
Care of John Gibson
Rygate
Vermont

In Haste

Dear Father

Pokeepsie, April 26th., 1838

I have just received yours of the 14th April and I am sorry to hear that that Dam'd scoundrel, Buckanan's *Nephew* has had the villany so to defraud you. Truly he shall have his reward. I have a letter from George about five days ago, he was at Thomsonville and wanted to know if I would find work for him, I sent him an answer to come on, he has not yet arrived, whether he will come or not I do not know, I have no liking for him should rather he would not come.

I am happy to hear you have got a farm. I should like to know who you have it from, I am sorry I am unable to render much assistance, would to God I were able. Ten dollars which I enclose is all I am able to give at present. If I have good luck I shall be able to send ten more by the Fall. I will do all I can for you and if George comes here he owes me about 15 dollars which as soon as I get a Loom for him he will pay me and it shall be transmitted to you. I therefore hope he will come and do well for your sake. I have borrowed a good deal of money from William Stephen which I must pay him soon. He has credited *me long* and will not see me want. We are *Sworn Brothers* Trade is a little better at present, not very great prospects however. I am still in the same place at 7 Dollars per Week. Agnes is in good health, how long I know not as she will likely make a Noise some of these days. We live very happy together, she has earned a good deal by her needle.

She will not be able to comply with your request in visiting Vermont this summer, we must be richer before that can be. The money necessary for such a journey would be much better expended in giving it to you to buy a Horse which you are so much in need of. I have certainly to acknowledge my obligations to Mr. Gibson for his increasing kindness. What had been our fate without his assistance, the time will come I hope we will be able to reward him, he has my grateful thanks, may he prosper in this world and be happy in the world to come.

Now Father be industrious do all you can. I hope the farm you have now taken will be yet your own. Write soon tell me who your farm belongs to what sum would make it yours, and how your crops

get along., if you have a good Brane?, how many potatoes you have set, how much milk your cow gives, how is the Quart and the price of the cow&c.

Give Arch my respects, I hope he will mind his Father and help him along, and I shall ever be proud to think I have such a brother. Agnes sends her respects to you all and wishes you every prosperity.

From Your Dutiful
Son and Daughter
Robert & Agnes Dickson

Robert writes this time to tell of the birth of his son, whom the parents named Stephen after Robert's friend Mr. Stephen. This is quite a break from the traditional habit of naming the children the family names of George, Robert, James, John, Archibald and Thomas to cite a few of the names which are found in past and succeeding generations of Dicksons.

Addressed to:

Mr. John Dickson
Care of John Gibson
Rygate
Vermont

PoKeepsie, August 4, 1838

Dear Father,

I am happy to inform you of our Good Health. Yours of 12th May came duly to hand and I am happy to hear of Your welfare, and of Archibald's *Good Behavior*. I hope you will have good crops this season, and that you will have good remuneration for your labour. You tell me of Archibald wishing you to buy a property and that he would do all he could to pay it, I am happy of this. I would certainly encourage you in such an undertaking. Brother George did not come to PoKeepsie as I expected. He had never wrote to me, I have since heard that he is spinning in Thomsonville, I expect in the Carpet Factory there. I would advise you to write to him. I will not, he no doubt has Good Wages and if steady, making money I would be very glad to hear of his welfare. I have to inform you, that I have made a Grandfather of you and a Grandmother of mother and an Uncle and Aunt of Little Agnes and Thomas and all the others. Agnes presented me with a *Son* and *Heir* on June 28th 1/2 past Five o'clock. She got on remarkably well. Having taken bad on the fore part of the day, she got it all over by 5 o'clock. The little Fellow is in excellent Health as well as Agnes. His name is Stephen Dickson for my worthy Friend

Mr. Stephen in N. Y. who was here on a visit last week and is in good health. I mean to give Stephen his Christened Name by and by.

I have a Letter from Scotland, from my Father in Law, who tells me that he has got another wife which makes his third. They have had very bad times in Scotland, and a good deal of sickness. 2 of the Boys have a fever and George the oldest of Agnes's Brothers died on the 17th Sept. last. This was very melancholy news to us. He tells me a Letter has arrived from at, Johnstone; John Buntin and Ann I expect will be married by this if all things went wright, Mr. Crow mentioned that he had heard that Brother John had left Grenock, where he had gone it is not known. Probably to Liverpool, for my own part I think he will be here shortly, in America . . . We have a man weaving in our Factory from Rochester, who tells me that Peter McCallum is there Tailoring as Formerly. Daniel is married, so is Varmet (?) They have made considerable money there, have a fine property in Rochester, and *going a Head*. I hope you are all in Good Health together with my Uncle aunt and cousins. Give them all my best wishes. Write me as soon as this come to *hand*, tell how your circumstances are, who is your *landlord*, how much milk the Cow gives, if you have any Pigs or Hens, or Fowl of any description, I hope You get a little weaving to help you along, but the winter will be the best time for that. My Sincere wish, with my wife's, is for your welfare, and I am only sorry that I have so little in my power, to assist in making you happy—but cheer up Father, Constant Industry will triumph,

Your affectionate son and daughter
Robt. and Agnes Dickson

The letters which came from Scotland portray the conditions that prevailed there at this period.

James Lang must have married a sister of Sarah Helen Johnstone as the following letter was sent from Johnstone the home of the Johnstones and was written to Dear Brother and Sister.

Included in this letter is a note from John Buntin a friend or relative.

Addressed to Mr. John Dickson
to the care of Mr. John Gibson
Ryegate, State of Vermont

Johnston, 27th August, 1838

Dear Brother and Sister

We received your letter dated 11th May, and we are very happy to learn that you are all in good health and in a settled way, we fondly hope that you will now be happy when you have arrived at your long

wished for destination and free country, we can likewise inform you that we are all in good health and spirits, we are still in the old house and worked with the kye we sold Beauty at our last fair and got \$9 or Lbs. for her. We have the one at home that was hired out and we are bringing up a young one, and John Biggar's cow is now in calf, you are now enjoying a country life and as steam-boats are being run between this country and America, Grace hopes yet to pay you a visit and have a friendly meeting, John and Mary Biggar are both in good health and has a Daughter of 7 months old. I need scarcely add that she is named for her grandmother, Peter and wife are well. Mary and husband were out on a visit at our house lately, she had a Daughter in the month of May last, my Brother Charles died about a twelve month ago, After you sailed from Greenock your son John and Archibald Mc Farlane went to Dublin where the latter enlisted in 92 regiment and is now lying in Canada, and when John returned he did not settle at his work but went away we know not where but as soon as we can find him his uncle Mr. Allan is willing to pay his passage to America, our trade is much the same as when you left us. Prices are very low but there is work to be got, last winter was unusual severe. You may form an idea of the strength of the frost when I inform you that the canal was frozen up 8 weeks, and this summer has been very wet. The crops are late but there is an appearance of abundance of all kinds of crops. It is about a fortnight later than other seasons, our oats meal at is 2/ per stone and potatoes 1/ per peck, 4 lb. loaf 10 per lb., fresh butter 11 per lb, beef from 5 to 6 per lb. We would have wrote sooner but we were waiting for a conveyance of our letter with James Cochran who intended to go to America after the death of his wife Barbara still on a visit to his friends, There is now a railway making from the port of Ayr city to the city of Glasgow to go past the following towns of Kilmarrock, Beth, Kilbarcan, Johnstone, Paisley and to Glasgow. When you write again be particular in stating the price of horse and kye, how much the land will produce averaging it by our own country, also what will an acre of good arable land cost so that if ever I come to America I may be able to purchase about as much of clear land as will support a family, Aunt Speirs and Mary are both in good health, Uncle got a reading of the letter and was glad to learn that you arrived. They all send you their compliments, Robert Smith, Archibald Goldie, James Malcolm, send you all their kindest compliments. Mr. Crow has got married he sends you his compliments. he wrote two letters to Robert and got no answer and is anxious to know if they are well, from James Lang. *Mr. John Dickson I am happay to hear that you (the family) is settled their farming line, and hope that by your industry you will be abel to mack yourselves comfortable and happy. Trade heir appers to me to fast on the

decline although That I have not done much since that Day I left you on your way to Amarica, the Shop was burnt to the ground got a fonander at it from which I did not get better for about 7 months after that wrote about 3 months at the time of the Severe Froust which lasted for about 12 weeks so hard that the oldest has never seen it so severe, I took badly in April again and is but getting better. About that time or after May. I began to build a shope over my Fathers House which I think hurt my health a good deal, and I have often thought that a voyage to Amarica would do me good, but had I thought that my health would be so bad before I laid out my *money* I would been at your house by this time. There is a grate steam Boat running between this and New York in 12 days time there is one line at Grennock at 5 hundred horse power for by 2 or three lying on the Stocks at London which should run a good deal farther we will be enabled to see one annother yet. Wrote a letter to Robert the last week, which James McAdams has taking with him to N.Y.

Good Night is my respect to the hoil Family.

I remain Yours truly

John Buntin or Burtin

* This part of letter written by another person.

Robert remains faithful to the responsibilities which he thinks he as the eldest son owes his family.

Direct Post Office Box 110

John Dickson

Care of John Gibson

Ryegate

Vermont

My Dear Father

Pokeepsie, Nov. 15th., 1838

On the 12th. Inst. I received a Letter from Arch, the *first* and I hope not the *last* as I have not been better pleased with any Letter I have read in some time, at first I thought that this cannot be his writing but the style of Language at once convinced me that it must be his, I assure you that I felt proud to see my young brother (he was 18 years old at this time) acquit himself so handsomely. It appears that you are all getting on well and that Arch is doing everything he can to assist you. I am glad of this and I hope he may continue to do so, which he shall never repent, when years shall have past away and perhaps you and I and his mother shall be in the Silent *Grave* he then can look back with pleasure on the little he has done to make you happy with no other regret than that it had been more.

But to business he has suggested the idea of purchasing the farm, you now rent, at the sum of \$485. He wishes George and myself to join him in this purchase as he can't do all himself. Now before I say anything more on the subject, I want to hear your opinion on this lot of land, if you think it *cheap* and whether you cannot make a better purchase some where else. You must know something of its value. I shall be willing to join in anything for your comfort and happiness and if Arch is willing to make the following agreement, I am willing that my father purchase the Farm and that is in his name and that whatever money he, Arch, pays my father shall have the benefit of as long as he lives. My mother after him. She may either let it out, or if she has the means to cultivate it, she may for her own benefit, and at the death of the last of our parents, the Farm be sold and each person or his heirs have his proportion according to the sum he paid in at the purchase. I may also state that it would be only fair if our parents should be able and pay to any of us their part of all of our money, they then should leave their part to whom they would. I shall be willing to pay one third of the sum on the above conditions. God willing! Whether George be willing for this or not I cannot yet tell. I wrote to him on the day I received Arch's letter, he is I believe, at Thompsonville, and did not come on to Pokeepsie as I had expected. At the same time the purchasing of this Farm would be a home for us all and Arch and all of you might be employed at it and if industrious you might be all very happy.

I hope we will be able to put the proposition in practice that you may, as Arch says, "be sitting at your ain fireside yet".

I have a letter from Buntin and one from G. Crow brought by L. McAdam. Three days before I received them, I have-written to both of them by a young man going to Scotland. They are all well. Buntin except Ann and him not married yet. I suppose you may have heard that Agnes's Father has got married. He is worth half a dozen of Buntin.

We are all well at home. little Stephen is lively as a *lark*. he is a *Splendid Boy*. I hope that he will be more Fortunate than his Father. Agnes sends her respects to you all and wishes you all happiness, I will add no more save that

I remain as ever

Your affectionate

Son

Robert Dickson

P.S. Tell Arch I will write to him as soon as I receive an answer from George

—Father write Soon.

The following letter from Robert is an example of the "canniness" a trait attributed to the Scotch. The plans for purchasing a farm left nothing to doubt and was fair to all parties involved.

Mr. John Dickson
Care of John Gibson
Ryegate, Vermont

Pokeepsie, March 12, 1839

Dear Father

Yours of the 4th Inst came duly to hand, I am very happy to hear of your welfare, also sorry for Arch, but hope he will be soon better, and able to resume his work, indeed it would be a bad affair if he were to be disabled long, as he appears to be your chief support. I have written twice to Thompsonville but it appears that George is not there as I have received no answer. Therefore, I think he must have gone some where else, with regard to purchasing the farm, I would say, go ahead, if I have as good luck, as I have had I will be able to assist considerable in another year. I expect to have my wages raised first of May which will enable me to spare a little more for this object, Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see you seated under your own roof, or to render it Scriptural, "Seated under your own vine and figg tree", none making you afraid. I can assure you Father it was with no ordinary pleasure that I read of the number of cows, Pigs, sheep, etc, that you are now possessed of. May Providence guard and protect you and them from harm, and I hope your humble efforts will finally be crowned with complete success. To serve as a little stimulus to further exertion, I enclose in this a Ten Dollar Note, which will help to pay your rent. I have but little money or I would gladly send more. You know I have rent to pay also, which is ten dollars more than yours. With all the little indescribables which it takes to maintain a house in town. The country is different.

Things in Pokeepsie, Trade is very good at present in the carpet business, we have orders for over twelve thousand yards, and talk of adding 9 looms to our present number. I have had the good fortune to be employed by an industrious, persevering man, very stingy, but a man of principle, whatever he promises he performs. God knows how often I have failed in the practise of this virtue, but I am getting older, may my resolves strengthen, as I advance in days and years. There was a considerable stir about a factory of fifty looms to be erected by Chas. Delafield, but the poor fellow could not raise the capital, that is the cash, the most useful article in this world, it is indeed the one thing needful. I had the honour to be engaged by Mr. D. to super-

intend this imaginary factory, which I am a little sorry did not succeed. Mr. Delafield is a fine fellow, a good friend of mine, son of John Delafield, late President of Pheonix, Bank of York, which there was so much noise about, one of the greatest financiers of the Union. By the bye I received a present of ticket for a course of Lectures delivered by Chas. Delafield this last winter, also two handsome engravings which he presented to me last week. My present employer hearing of Delafield's intention of engaging me, told me that I must not leave him to stick by him and he would stick by me, so I proposed that he would stick 2 dollars on my wages per week, namely 9 dollars which he made no objection to, but said he meant to raise my salary. I have this day subscribed for a newspaper The Pokeepsie Telegraph, one of which I send as a sample. Now say if you have any opportunity of seeing a paper regularly, if you have not, I will send mine regular, which will cost you a cent a paper Postage, I believe. There is a good deal of information for Farmers in it which might be very useful to you. You could file them all together and they would prove a rare treat for the winter evenings. If you would like to have them sent, let me know, You may, instead of writing, Postage being high, let me know by sending one of your Vermont Papers, which I will consider an answer in the affirmative. If you receive this letter with the ten Dollars all safe inform me of the same by a line through the number of the Paper, which I shall take as a sign that alls well. I must now conclude, but before I do so, I must congratulate my cousin on her happy nuptials, which I hope will be by this time cemented in endless bliss and wish them all the happy ness imaginable. Respects to Old Uncle and Aunt, Agness has her love for you all. By the bye I had almost forgot to tell you that Stephen can creep on the floor first rate, and has got 2 teeth a month ago. He also was presented with a Dress from Mr. Pelton a few weeks since.

Adieu

Your Affectionate

Son and Daughter

R. & A. Dickson

P.S. No news from Scotland. Direct Box 110 Post office.

The letters from Scotland keep the family a close knit unit.

James Lang was another brother-in-law of John Dickson. His letter illustrates the generosity of the Scotch; this is a trait easily lost sight of due to the fuss that is made over the fact that some one started the story that the Scotch were "close". Every good Scotsman knows that that is not true but con-

vincing a non Scotsman that the Scotch are a generous people is not easy.

Uncle Lang writes that friends will collect some money to give to the son John so that he may go over to America to be with his parents and brothers and sisters.

The Sir William Napier, owner of a factory, mentioned here, married a Spiers girl and so became a cousin of the family.

Johnston 18th March 1839

Dear Brother & Sister

I have embraced the opportunity of writing you by Mr. Miller an acquaintance of Roberts, who was on a visit to this country and was returning to Pokeepsie, We are at present all in good health, and continuing the same mode of life that we did while you were in this country, we got a letter from your Son John who is residing at New castle upon-tyne in England. he is in good health and following his trade, we returned him an answer and wished him to inform us if he thought of going to America, that he would write us sometime previous to his intended departure, so that we might try and obtain a little assistance for him among the Friends, we hope you will take an early opportunity of writing us, as we are anxious to hear from you, and our anxiety is increased by accounts in the Dublin prints of the Canadian rebels having made a descent on the state of Vermont plundered that part of the country and carried off all the spoil they could procure, Mr. Gibson of Ryegate is particularly mentioned as having been obliged to fly the house before he could put on his clothing, our trade is much the same at present as has been for two years past, work is easily got but prices has advanced but little, the country is in a very agitated state, arising from a demand on the government for an extension of the sufferage, vote by Ballot, and anual Parliments, Johnston is in a very disturbed state owing to the Cotton spiners wages being very much reduced Sir Wm. Napier's mill has struch work a little damage has been done a few person severely hurt, for which a number has been imprisoned, policemen are dayly parading the town, and altogether the times assumes a gloomy appearance, mackets are very high at present potatoes are $\frac{1}{4}$ pe peck beef 5 to 6 per lb. four lb. 10 meal 2 5 per load, Peter Johnston and family are all in good health, and send you their compliments you will accept of John & Mary Biggar's best respects, John Buntin has got married to Roberts sister in-law. You will let James Cochran know that widow Cockran's family are all well and that Mr. Campbell's widow

is dead and his property is now in the hands of Mr. John Hoomes and is in a very deranged state he must write soon about it, when you write you will tell particularly the price of land, of cattle, of clothing, and other things connected with and American life, if the country is healthy, and if we could live comfortable in it should we come to that conclusion

From

Your

Aff.

Friend

James Lang

Written on James Lang's letter were these notes from Robert.

Your have all My Particulars in this Letter about Johnston. Write soon and more particularly tell me of what stock you have got, Little Stephan and his mother are both well and join in sending this love

Your aff. Son Rob Dickson

Pokeepsin May 10th

We are all well George sent me word by a Young Man that he thought of coming on to this Place—this letter was brought by a Scotchman who left Pokeepsin for Scotland last Fall he was at Johnston called on our Fat Loney and slept at Bontin's our night.

Robert writes to his parents concerning the marriage of a cousin a Spiers daughter to a Knight, Sir Wm. Napier.

He also writes of the labor troubles at the factory and how he thinks they should be handled.

An account of Sir Napier's desire for peace and quiet on the Sabbath is given in the "Kilbarchan Parish" as quoted in a previous chapter.

Addressed to:

John Dickson

McIndoes, Falls

Barnet

Vermont

PoKeepsie Nov. 21, 1839

Dear Father,

I have delayed a considerable time in writing you. The times have been in such an unsettled state, that I thought I would wait a little longer in hopes of having better News, till, I fear, I have postponed so often, that your patience will be nearly exhausted.

Your last letter gave me a whole *Budget of Old Country News*. Things go on most admirably there. The Spears have gone the "whole Hog" as we Yankees say, married to a Knight's Daughter. Father tis well that we are all in this land of Equality, for they would be literally ashamed of us. R. M. Spears and Sir William Milliken Napier—Bart's Daughter. Suppose we had been still plodding away at the weaving in Johnstone and on a Saturday making our way to the Warehouse should happen to meet their highness in all their grandeur and aristocratic Magnificence how would you look. I'll tell you how you'd look, "You'd look blame' sheepish I assure you," as the Negro Preacher said. I am however happy to hear of their success and good Fortune, but I don't believe altogether in that hackneyed Term "Good Fortune". A man is generally the maker of marrer of his Fortune, and every days experience confirms this opinion, for example I came to PoKeepsie a perfect stranger and unacquainted with the business I have now the entire management of. I draw all our Patterns Original and Copying. A job I never tried till I came to this place. I have done upwards of 50 Patterns worth about \$500 Dollars, in this Art I never recieved any instruction but just set to it and Perseveried till I am now Master of it, I beleive if I had embraced the opportunities I have had when in Scotland I might have been something when I left it, instead of being nothing but a Poor, dilatory lazy fellow, the dupe of my own imbecility. *Perserverance, Perserverance!* should be the favorite adage of every man, and a Father should take every oportunity of impressing its importance and value on the minds of his children. We can do much if we would only try. Only use the little word try and you will be sure to succeed.

We have had very bad times, here this sommetime, back, no money. The Banks the Banks are all the cry, Pity one half of these Rotten Institutions were under the Billows of the Atlantic, They are certainly on a bad basis. I hope the State Treasure will at least deprive these rascals of the Peoples money. That they may no longer enrich themselves at the Peoples Expense. The Three Carpet Factories in this Place are still in operation ours on full time. The others on $\frac{3}{4}$ time. We go ahead of all the rest and have not a yard of carpet on hand while the other talk of shutting up. One Factory had discharged 12 hands and likely will soon stop. Last week the two of the Factories agreed to take 2 cents off the Yard, and requested Pelton to join them in this reduction. He refused would not comply. They attempted to pay less but the hands stood out, and one Factory Delafields has gave in, and Paying the old Prices. The other Whinfields has not yet complied. You see what we are that refused, and stood firmly against this oppresive Measure. Pelton stands high among the Weavers, a little advice does a good deal of good sometimes he had made up his mind to

break the prices with the rest, I used the argument I could to dissuade from doing it and I succeeded, I have the satisfaction of having done my duty if I have shared none of the applause. George is still working in our factory, and had boarded with me till Saturday, last, when he left dissatisfied with his board altho he ate at the same table with Agnes and myself. With respect to your farm write me and let me know how you like this new place, I am afraid property will fall and I should like to know your opinion on that subject; pork is selling at 3 - 6 dollars. Flowr 6½ to 7 dollars. Butter (1/6 & 21 shillings) pr. pound. These are the principle articles of produce. Pork and Butter especially. Say if you think on holding your bargain of this farm I am willing to assist you which ever you do, all well. Respects to all friends, to mother, and to others.

Your affect Son

Robert Dickson

Cousin Robert Allan who has a "Forge Foundry" in Greenock was a frequent correspondent and later he visited America and his Dickson cousins when they were living at Waneka. The Allans were prosperous and travelled extensively.

In 1952 Cousin Robert Stewart gave us the snuff boxes and the masonic emblems of this Thomas Dickson whose death is reported in Robert Allan's letter.

Rose Hill Greenock

April 15, 1840

Dear Uncle:

I received your letters of 7th and 9th of September about 3 months ago and was glad to hear of your welfare and that of all our friends in America. Also of the increase of your wordly substance since taking up your abode on the other side of the Atlantic. I have now the painful duty to perform of acquainting you of the death of your Brother Thomas he died on Sabbath morning the 4th March. He was confined mostly to the house for 2 months before he died. His widow was left everything belonging to him except his clothes which William got. She is carrying on the shop still and I think will make a good livelihood. Mrs. Boyd died on the 6th of this month and was buried the day before yesterday. My Father and George was up at the funeral which consisted of hearse and 4 horses coach and 4 horses, and 14 mourning coaches besides. Wm. Austing's youngest boy died about 3 month ago and Mrs. Willis' girl also about a month later. We have

heard that Robert Speir's Lady has a Daughter at Paris. Aunt Speir and Mary are just in the same state of health as usual. Uncle Speir is still going about but getting frail. No more of the young ladys like to get married at Burnbrae, but by the by, I am proposing myself to get married in about 6 weeks hence, to a Miss Elder, daughter of Capt. Elder of Greenock and I have every cause to think she will make a good wife. James Dickson is still at the Bay of Quick. Aunt Janet and her family are well. You have given me a description of the rout to your place would I come but the circumstance above mentioned prevents that taking place. We are enlarging our work to a great extent. Just now we have fenced half an acre to the east of the old forge and are enclosing the whole in one, we are getting another engine of 50 horse power and other two hammers of the most extensive and improved kind from which you will infer that things are thriving with us. This new work will cost us near three thousand pounds. We have never heard a word of your son John since I wrote you before. I hope he is safe at Rygate ere this time. Mrs. Thom and Mrs. Muir and their husbands are well and desire to be remembered to all friends. We are all well. My mother and Father join me in good wishes for your welfare. My Mother is sorry about her sister's sore face and hopes that she is recovering. Remember us all to Mr. Gibson and all the family, not forgetting the young.

Always I remain
Dear Uncle
Your nephew
Robert Allan

P. S. This is sent by Mr. Gibson's friend, Mr. Gleason, who has kindly offered to take it.

—————R.A.

The following is the last letter from Robert Dickson; it was written two days before his death but not delivered to his parents, and does not seem to be completed. He may not have been well and for that reason did not complete the letter.

If any descendants of Robert Dickson are living they would cherish these letters of their great great grandfather for he was a young man of very high ideals, and possessed of a great desire to have his parents and his brothers and sisters attain a full and secure life.

Addressed to:
Mr. John Dickson
Farmer
Rygate
Vermont

Pokeepsie Oct. 14, 1840

Dear Father

Yours of Sept. came duly to hand, I am sorry to hear that Mother is so poorly. I hope she will yet recover that she may be a blessed companion to you in your declining years. God Grant, that the closing days of your pilgrimage may be more happy than were the beginning. Every day that I live I feel more and more grateful to that divine being whose bountiful munificence I every day enjoy and see so liberally distributed to all the human Family around me, this Earth might be a Paradise if man had only the wisdom to use aright those Blessings which the God of Nature in his Infinite Goodness makes it yield,—Father let us thank God that we now enjoy so much of his goodness that the hand of Tyranny and oppression cannot now rob us of our labor that the sword can not force us now, to think as an unholy Government would have us think. That we are *Free, Free, Free* as the mountain Breeze which you inhale on the Green mountains of Vermont.

Father let us be industrious and Frugal and virtuous and we will be happy, happiness is what we are all in pursuit of how easy were it gained were we wise. O happy is the man who hears the Instructing Warning voice, and who celestial wisdom makes his early only choice. We are always happy when we have done our duty. Let this truth be deeply impressed on our hearts that it may serve as a warning voice to deter us from evil, and keep us in the path of virtue. O may your little Farm, prove a home of Peace contentment and love where all is Union Affection and kindness where no discord or discontent or rangling or disputing is ever heard where all is tranquility and Peace. To you as a Father I look for the cherishing and promoting of these ends, may you by your prudence and Integrity, your wisdom and justice, your Benevolence and love, be not only a great Pattern for them to immitate, but be their guardian teacher and friend diffusing knowledge and virtue, Peace and contentment among them with a Father's tenderness and Love.

With regard to your success on the Farm you complain of the drougthyness of the season and of the consequent shortness of crops and scarceness of Butter, this complaint appears to be pretty general as regard the Drought. Grass has been very poor about PoKeeepsie, having literally burned up, so long were we without rain. So low is the water in our creeks even at the present time that our spinners have only about

fourth time. We have in consequence been compelled to purchase Filling at N. York to keep the Looms in operation. Butter must be dear this season. We pay at Present 21 cents per lb. Potatoes from 2 shilling (?) to 50 cents, beef 10 cents, pork 10 cents, mutton 8 cts. So you see from this table things are about the same. Butter they say is on the rise however; If the Quantity is small it must be dearer. Butter is an article there is a great consumption of. The Americans use Butter in almost everything. Attend well to your dairy look well to your cows. See that you raise enough of roots for them.

This letter accompanied the above:

PoKeepsie Feb. 8th, 1841

Dear Father and Mother;

It is so long since I received yours that I am ashamed to write, but I shall answer the next sooner. I send you the above because I know you will prize it as a voice from the grave being written two days previous to his decease and will give you a better idea of the state of his mind at the latter end than I can do in words. He was perfectly sensible to the last and answered any question that might be put to him with the greatest satisfaction altho suffering under the great load of pain and agony that was fast drawing to a final end yet he could name almost every one of his numerous freinds that flocked to take a last long farewell. One Mr. two doctors, his two employers, some of their wives and a great lot of workers. Amongest them all you could not have told who shed tears most freely. I alone stood mute and silent with not a tear to cool the burning fever of a brow that could not yet realise its loss. I could dwell a great deal longer on this sad affliction that will be so keenly felt by us both. We intended to have sent you 100 or 100 and 50 dollars to help to pay the farm but it is said somewhere the present moment is our own the next we never see. Mother says I might do well at my needle. Send me word the next time you write what kind of work whether dress-making, tailoring or plain sewing or if I could live there without being bothersome, also if I could travel with little children. If I come I shall want to bring all my furniture which will consist of about 6 or 7 boxes and chest, besides chairs. John Buntin wishes you to mention the first time you write if theres any good farms with a water fall for sale or if you think it too far in the country. If there's any farms for sale at all he wishes you to state your opinion as to whether he might do well there or not. Write soon and let me know how you have been this year. I shall always feel interested in your welfare whether I come to live beside you or not.

We had a letter from Father last week in which he states that he went to Aunt Lang in Church street and read her the melancholy news.

She said they had had a letter from brother John but he don't seem as if he minded much about America. She wrote back to him of Robert's death and to Grenock to Aunt Allan. He also mentions the death of your old neighbor A. Foulder who died sitting in his chair but had been complaining for a day or two. Also the burning of Stewers mill which took place on the 12th of December about 3 quarters of an hour before the usual time to quit. There were no lives lost but the woman in whose hand the cotton was that took fire has since died. This leaves us all in good health hoping to find you the same, Mr. and Mrs. Buntins love to you all.

Yours Agnes Dickson

The son who did not come to America with the family or before was John. Frequent references have been made to him in letters received from the Scotch relatives. John was one of the brothers whose heirs have been lost to the family. In this letter he writes of the son whom he named John and who was born June 2, 1843. He also tells of the daughter Sarah Helen who was born August 18, 1841. John, the father died in Portland, Maine in 1856.

His description of the hard times prevailing at this time are illustrative of the struggle for survival man has made from his beginning.

Mr. John Dickson
to the care of Mr. Gibson farmer
Ryegate State of
Vermont
North America
July 18th 1843

Dear Father and Mother Sisters and Brothers I take this opportunity of writing to let you know that I am well at present and I hope this will find you in the same. My wife was deliver of a son the 2nd of June last and they are both well. I have gave him his name John D. after you and my daughter she will be two years old the 18th of August and her name is Sarah after my mother. I would like very well if my wife, daughter and son and I could have the pleasure of seeing you again I never will be happy til I get to you. I have a very bad prospect of that, the trade is bad and the wages so low that men can hardly live. There is thousand after thousand has not a day's work nor does not know where to get a bit of bread. The country is in a very bad state at present so the sooner I get to you the better so I will take

upon me to ask you a favour that is if you and my brother could raise as much money as would take me over to you. I would pay you and them the money back as soon as I got work. If you think anything of me do that for me and I never will ask you to do anything more for me. I would be happy if I only could get to you to comfort you in your old age I would take a great pleasure and I think it would be a pleasure for you to see your grandchildren and your prodigal son so if you intend to do me the favor that I have asked for do it as soon as ever you can and send me the directions how I am to come to you. I can work with you or stay at my trade, I will either way you want me.

I have no word from Scotland lately but the last word I got they were all well. Give all my brothers my best respects and my sisters my best respects and that I hope they will do as much as they can to get me over to them.

Send me answer as soon as you receive this

so no more at present

but your most humble and obedient son

John Dickson

Mr. John Dickson

forge man

Stella forge by

Newcastle upon Tyne

County of Durham, England.

Cousin Robert Allan writes of the death of Aunt Agnes Dickson who must have been the wife of the Uncle Thomas Dickson whose snuff box and Masonic emblems Cousin Robert Stewart gave us in 1952.

Mr. John Dickson

Care of Mr. John Gibson Farmer

Township of Ryegate

Vermont U. S. America

Greenock 21 April 1854

Dear Uncle and Aunt

I write you at this time more particularly to inform you of the death of Aunt Agnes Dickson. She died of cholera on the 26 March last and was buried the same day. A joint will by Uncle Thomas and her was found in her drawers. It is to this effect tha whatever the longest liver may possess at death is to be equally divided among his nearest heirs. The heirs are My Mother, Aunt Janet Dickson and Yourself. At the time of Uncle Thomas's death he was worth 60 or 70

pounds, but after that Aunt got a servant Girl who not only lost all she had, but left her deep in debt. We all saw what was going on but she would not part with her. She however got married and Aunt got a better one; for the last five years she has been doing better, has managed to pay her debt and has left about 55 lbs. The expenses of confirmation and legacy duty will take about 10 lbs. off this which I think will leave about 45 lbs. for division. Which being divided into three as above will be fifteen pounds each. If you will therefore by first mail send a proper receipt, I will remit that amount, or more or less as it may turn out.

Small as the affair is, I have had a great deal of trouble with it

I suppose you heard of my father's death in July 1841. My mother is getting very frail but still going about. Robert Spear died about a year and a half since. His widow and son are living in London. Mrs. Willis and Mrs. Austin are both in Australia and the other ladies and Thomas are at Burnbrae and the seaside alternately. Mary Spear is living at Greenock the same poor miserable creature as ever. By the by whatever clothes Aunt left were sent down to her as she was very needful. Brother George is still attending to the forge. He has now five of a family. I have also five and I am Living in a house to the West of my mother's cottage which I purchased three years ago.

We are very busy at the Forge and have been so for the last two years with every prospect of a continuance of it. We have now five forge hammers working with a steam power equal to 120 horses. We have 120 men and we use about 200 tons of scrap iron every month at the same time burning 1,000 tons of coal or 1800 carts per month.

Sister Margaret is living with my mother and has her own house let. Janet is living in Dunoon, her husband has gone to Australia so that everybody is moving while I and George seem to be fixtures. I have a great desire to see America and if I am able to retire from business before I get to old to travel, I will perhaps walk into your house some afternoon. My wife has two sisters in Montreal who were home lately, they told me they could see the Vermont mountains from their house. All friends join with me in sending their kind love to you and Aunt and all your family. I forgot to say that James Dickson? is with us at the Forge. His son George is away to India, Robert is in London, Janet in Glasgow and Violet? and May at home all doing well.

I am, Dear Uncle, Your Affectionate Nephew, Robert Allan

Belville Place, Greenock

During these Vermont years Archibald was married to a Janet Gibson and Mary was married to William Whitcher. Agnes was engaged to be married to D. A. Slye whom she

married at North Pepin, Wisconsin, when the family came West.

When the family came to Vermont in 1837 they were met by relatives. The Uncle John Gibson had married, in Scotland, Agnes Dickson the sister of Grandfather John Dickson. The Gibsons came to America previously to 1837 and had settled in Vermont. Another sister of John's back in Scotland, Margaret, was married to George Allan of Greenock, Scotland. George was the father of the Cousin Robert Allan who came to America to visit his cousins. Robert was the grandfather of the Cousin Robert Allan Clapperton Stewart who has been of much assistance in securing data on the family.

The Janet Gibson who married Archibald Dickson was the mother of Mrs. Orthus T. Remington, Mrs. Wm. L. Botsford, Mrs. Frank C. Baggs and Mrs. Hugh Campbell.

In making this study of a Scotch family it has been of great interest to see how the family names have been used over and over again. Seldom do you see a new name introduced. Generation after generation and family after family remain loyal to the family names. Mrs. Remington was Mary Ann, Mrs. Botsford was Agnes Sarah, Mrs. Baggs and Mrs. Campbell were twins Margaret Ann and Martha Jane respectively.

The mother Janet Gibson Dickson had received a legacy in Scotland. In order to receive the interest on this legacy she was required to make an annual trip to Scotland to receive it in person. After her death the money was not forthcoming and the family sent Lawyer Shoemaker to Scotland to see what could be done; however the Scotch law required that inheritances revert to the State in a case such as Janet Gibson Dickson's. The money which came to her was under the "Deed of Mortification" of Daniel Baxter. At first all public documents were kept in the churches and later moved so it is difficult to locate certain ones. Daniel Baxter had lived early in the 1800's and had been a man of considerable means and a distant relative of Janet Gibson. His estate was so well ad-

ministered, after his death that every penny was accounted for and increased but his bequest to Janet died with her passing and could not be collected by anyone else.

The Dicksons, the Gibsons and others who were relatives and friends in Scotland continued in their efforts to become established in Vermont. They had a small farm. Here in these granite hills of Vermont they hoped to secure land and make a home which would give them security for their later years. They found that the traits for which Scotsmen are noted were needed here in America, their integrity, their willingness to work, the ability to endure hardships, the great need for thrift, and their ability to build a new way of life in a new country.

The brother John who wanted so much to come to America left England in 1838. His brother Robert in America wrote that he "had probably gone to Liverpool, for my own part I think he will be here shortly in America." It was not until 1843 that he could get to America.

In 1839 Grandfather George was at Poughkeepsie working in a carpet factory, as a weaver or a foreman of weaving, and boarding with his brother Robert.

In 1839 letters were addressed to John Dickson at McIndoes Falls Barnet, Vermont. In 1840 the letter was addressed to Ryegate. Perhaps McIndoe Falls is near by. In 1841 Robert died at the age of 26. His son Stephen was born in 1838. Robert came to America in 1835. He may have come to Lynn, Mass., first. At this time he earned \$6 dollars per week as a weaver. John as we said before came to America after 1843; and fulfilled his wish that he might come to America to see his parents and brothers and sisters.

George must have gone to Connecticut about 1839 or 1840 as in 1841 he was married to Jane Turnbull of Tariffville.

The Scotch perhaps because of their clans have been symbolized by the word "clannish" and in a community where you found a Scotch family soon other Scotsmen were found; thus it was only natural that a Dickson coming from near Paisley

should make the acquaintance of a Turnbull family also coming from Paisley.

George lived in Connecticut after he was married, in 1841, until 1862 when he moved to Wisconsin to be near his brothers and sisters.

There was living in Ryegate at this time a school teacher Margaret Jane Harvey who nearly thirty years later was to marry a widower, George Dickson. Letters written by her to her brother, Robert, give us a picture of the people and the times when the Dicksons were living in Vermont.

Peacham October 30, 1851

Dear Brother:

You have been gone nearly four weeks and I cannot wait any longer I must write to you now. I intend to write once in four weeks regularly and oftener if I happen to have anything special to communicate. I expect to be a few days writing this as I have had a slight run of fever (not California). I came from home last Monday when it was blowing and snowing a regular "NorthEaster" and, taking a violent cold, was threatened very hard with a fever. However by calling on Dr. Farr in season I hope to get along without being sick this time. I feel much better today although quite weak yet.

We are looking every day for letters from the Isthmus, hope to get one before I send this one away. We have had two very hard storms since you left one of which is still raging, the water is running plentifully today, which we very much need. We have not heard any very bad news concerning you, but once, since you left and that was truly painful to me at the time. However we have heard it contradicted several times since. I will tell you what it was and wish you to tell me truly whether it was so or not. The story as it goes in Barnet is as follows. That you were all-*drunk* when you left Barnet and that your Capt., Mr. Rix, was the drunkest one among you. Who the author was I cannot say but it seemed to me the most cruel thing I could hear from you and I would be sorry to hear it respecting any of your company. I made up my mind when you left to be prepared to hear the worst but Robert I did not make up my mind to hear anything like the above nor I never can for it would be ten times crueler than death for me, to hear you were a drunkard, or ever likely to become one. Now I wish you to tell me honestly I will take your word concerning it. I must now lay this aside till another day as I am very tired.

Friday Morn

After a fine night's repose I again take my seat to try my hand at writing. I am almost well this morning think I shall be able to go in to school tomorrow. The school has two weeks and two days to keep after this week. I have not found a school for this winter and do not expect to. I think I shall go to California with Mrs. Farr. We think of going out and looking up a good place for the Doctor and then send back for him. He says he will come if we will do so. They are getting up a company in Ryegate numbering about fifty. I have not learned all their names yet but I heard the names of Mathew Gray, Loudon Somers, John F. Nels, Alex Miller, two Dicksons, two Eddy Millers, Jake and Will Symes and I do not know how many more.

John H. has gone home he did not stay but half the term. I believe he is going to school from home this winter. They have engaged Bickford for four months and five if they want him. Times are noisy here in Peacham among the scholars however Thompson and Harvey keep cool and there have been no bruised faces since their quarrel but they are constantly at it with their tongues. It is very unpleasant and many scholars have left. The trouble seems to be principally among the scholars the teachers are generally very well liked.

I was down home last Saturday the people were all well. Renwick was at home he has been shingling one side of the house. They could not have both sides shingled it would look so much like finishing a job. I presume they will do the other side in the course of five years. Mrs. Fuller was well and Ann is really much better. The great news of the day in that section was that Alonzo Fife and Phebe Abbott are going to be married; hard telling whose turn comes next.

Your policy has arrived at last. The first one came running to your wife. Mr. Martin had to send it back of course. The last one came correct. Twenty dollars and seventy cents was the sum to be paid. Next year it will be one dollar less. I hope you have got over your great excitement and become steady Robert I very much fear if you do not watch over yourself carefully you will get somewhat "rowdyish" away in those "golden lands". You must be very watchful do not think because you are away from home and also from all female society that there will be no need for you to try to behave gentlemanly, it is quite the reverse you will need to strive so much the harder. Resist temptation do not think anything is right because practiced by the multitude. Never do anything you would be ashamed to have your friends here know. I do hope and pray that you will keep the Sabbath. Remember you are under as great obligations to keep the Sabbath in Cal. as in Vermont. The same God presides over you there. His eye is upon you there and if you should be called upon to lay your head on a dying

pillow you would find the same need of His Presence as you would here and even more for there you would find no kind parents nor sister to soothe you in your last moments but He could supply their place and much more for of what avail would be the kindest earthly friend if your peace were not made with Him. You never will be prospered if you become ever so rich unless you get it honestly. You may perhaps think others have, but be assured you are mistaken they may seem to prosper and perhaps do apparently but could you know the real state of their hearts you would think quite differently. I never shall feel pleased to hear you are doing ever so well in California unless I hear you are a good boy. I would rather you would come home as poor as you left and come a good boy than come home ever so rich and a bad one. Now Robert do strive to be good perhaps you may see others prospering better who are not very particular in regard to their conduct but do not be discouraged. If you endeavor to do right and look to God for His blessing. He will certainly bless you sooner or later. I want you to write what kind of a journey you had and what you are doing who you are with &

I believe the people are all well as far as I know. I expect Renwick up tomorrow but I cannot go home with him. I do not know as he has any particular word to send to you if he has he will have to write on a separate sheet for I shall not have any room in this one. Aunt Emeline intends to send out a letter next week. I shall send this with it addressed to the care of John M. N. Scott and shall continue to do so until I hear from you. I think it will be best to write your name in full. If John should have anything to pay in consequence of its being directed to his care you must see that he is paid. You must write often as often as once a month at least, and if Mr. Rix is with you I hope he will open a spelling school and that you will attend. It would be a very good exercise after working all day.

Good bye, from your affectionate
Sister Margaret Jane Harvey

Please adress all your letters to Peacham for we can get them more readily from here than Ryegate and the mail comes in here every day, at Ryegate every other day.

I went down to Groton to Uncle Orr's with Lizzie the next Saturday after you left. The talk was then that David Whitehill was going to Cal. So good bye to the wedding. But I have heard since from some of the Orr's that they were going to be married, do not know whether I shall get going or not. If I do I shall write and tell you all about lumpy.

Ryegate, Jan. 3, 1852

Dear Brother Robert:

Happy New Year! to you although Jan. 3 I intended to write Jan. 1 but circumstances prevented. I started Topsham Thursday afternoon and came down to Groton expecting our folks would meet me there but they did not so I stayed at Mr. Paul's. They had a Ball at the tavern that night. Den Page was out from Ryegate and the next morning he brought me out to Scott's where I stayed until this morning. John brought me home and what to you think I received about fifteen minutes after I got home? A Letter! Yes a letter from R.G.H. We had made up our minds that we should not get any until next week, when they did not get here last week. Sarah F. brought it up. She also had one from Harvey and here I will mention that she wishes you to tell Harvey that they would send a letter to him addressed to Sacramento. I have written two letters to you the first one addressed to the care of John N. Scott, Oregon Bar, North Fork American River California dated Oct. 30, the second to Robert Gibson Harvey, Oregon Bar North Fork American River, Cal. dated Nov. 8.

I am teaching school in Popsham on the George Hill have left about eight weeks, have two dollars and six pence per week. Rennie goes to school down on the Hill. I wrote in one of my letters that they had engaged Justin Farr but he did not live to fulfill his engagement. He died the next week after Thanksgiving. I do not know exactly what his trouble was but I believe a fever of some kind. His friends have great comfort in his death in his leaving some evidence that he was prepared for a better world. He made several lengthy prayers during his sickness although the Doctor thought he did not have his senses while making two still they were correct and very distinctly spoken. He was deranged a great part of the time still he never uttered one profane word but talked a great deal about his school. The scholars felt very bad. They have Ira G. Glake for a teacher (Bickford is at the Corner he has a large school over sixty scholars I believe. He boards at Mr. Cowle's.) Mr. Cowle has been very unwell he is better but looks very much like a person in consumption. Nat Gray has had a very hard run of California fever. We thought he would really go but he has given up the idea, many others that have talked of going that have given it up. Several have gone from Barnet since you left and many others have talked about going Albert Hall and John Miller are going some time this month. John Scott is going back in Feb. There will probably some go with him. Lizzie wrote some in my last letter please tell if you think you shall ever get them? I should like to know what you dreamed the night you slept on the trunks? Did your knee trouble you when you were tramping over the Isthmus? Ren says

he guessed not when you waked up as bright as a dollar. Mother says I am to tell you she bears your absence wonderful well. I asked her which way she bore it up or down she said she bears it up. She wishes you to resist the temptations of Cal. You need not look for Father till they can convey the old mare and settee across on railroad. You remember Renwick's long vest that Sarah made for him. He has another—made just to suit him it comes almost to his knees. He can scarcely sit down.

Ryegate, Tuesday, Feb. 4, 1852

Dear Brother Robert:

You must not feel neglected because I have not written before. I should have written as soon as I got home from Topsham but thought I would wait till I had seen the people and got the run of the news about "our villa".

I finished my school Feb. 3 and came home the next day—found mother some unwell; she has had a bad cold—not being very sick—but hanging round not being able to do the work. Some call it the "Horse distemper"—a very appropriate name. Father is down in Haverhill at work on stone. He went away three weeks ago last Monday. He and Jim Orr's folks have had a settlement—he got somewhere about one hundred and twenty five dollars. He took all but fifty dollars at time of settlement—took Jim Orr's note for the rest. Afterward David Whitchell went and told H. Warden (so Warden says) that there was a chance for him—of course he improved it and trusted immediately. Jim Orr made a mistake about the day of court and for that reason they got judgement against him for the whole of Warden's note which was about seventy five dollars. Then Jim came and attached the horse after which Bill Darling put on another attachment of ten dollars. So we have received no benefit from any of the money and lost our horse in the fuss. I thought once of redeeming her but have concluded not to—thought it would involve me in debt too much.

The horse will be sold two weeks from today—but I think we would be far better off without one than with—for I am sure I cannot remember when we have had so quiet a time as we have had for three weeks past.

Renwick (a brother) goes to school down on the hill—I wrote about the teacher in my other letter—and Mary Ann, Sophronia, and Caroline would tell you all about the school when they wrote. The school at the Corner will close a week from next Thursday. I believe they have a very full school. John H. attends, I believe. I have not given your love to him for I have not seen him—but believe he has written to you—do not think I shall own him for a brother unless he

is more attentive. I presume you see Vermonters arriving in Cal. almost every day—there is hardly a week passes but some are leaving this section of the country. There has been such a rush that the tickets are all engaged to April and many have to remain at home—and four that started had to come back—Jacob Symes, Thomas Knight, and two Gibsons. John Miller, Albert Hall and Park Renfrew took passage around the horn. Thomas Wormwood and Moses Gates went in some kind of a freight vessel—I heard. John Scott will go as soon as he can obtain a ticket.

John Welch and Abba Dunn were married last Thursday. Edward Miller and Eliza Gates will be married two weeks from today. Will Eddy "they say" is going to be married this spring to one of "ould Jimmy Warden's girls. David W. and Mary C. will go some time next month—I suppose—have had no invitation yet—don't care. Going to California and getting married is all the toast now—think if I had any notion of either I should choose to go to California. Cos Jane is fixing as fast as possible for Cal. Morse, Marie has been teaching at West Barnet—Lizzie is teaching in B. in McMillan's district. She wrote part of a sheet in one of my letters. We have heard from you several times H. Fuller has always mentioned you in his letters, for which we thank him very much. His folks have written a great many more to him than I have to you—but you know there are more of them to write while I have all of the writing to do and am sometimes here and sometimes some where else. Ann F. is at Peecham at Dr. Farr's has been several weeks—her health is about as it was when you left perhaps a little better. Sarah is at home with her mother. They are both well. Mrs. McPhee wishes you to mention about Nathan in your letters if you know anything about him. Mr. Wormwood wants me to remind you of your promise about writing to him. I wish you would all hands write to him for he is all taken up about California. I guess if you were to write him a pretty glowing letter he would start off rheumatism and all. I think we have received all of your letters so far—hope you may get all of mine sometime. This makes the fifth I have written, I wrote two in Jan. When you receive them you will know where to look for the two first. Your last dated Dec. 20 we received the first of Feb. I will now lay this aside and write more some other day as the mail does not go out till the tenth of March I shall not be in a hurry about starting this off.

Tuesday, March 3, 1852

After waiting a week—once more again I attempt to converse with you in your far famed "golden land". It seems rather discouraging to think you do not get your letters—but if you do not get this you may be sure it is miscarried. I would pay the postage but John Laird says

you will not get them at all perhaps—says the best way is to send them unpaid. I shall send you some stamps in my next letter. This is Town Meeting Day and it is snowing right merrily. We have had sixteen weeks of winter and the prospects are good for sixteen more. That Groton wedding I have not heard anything more about but expect to hear soon. Whitehill has swapped farms with the Widow Hill. I think that a much pleasanter place than the Morse farm.

I mentioned in one of my letters that if you wished to send home any money I would take care of it but mother has told me since that you spoke to Mr. Laird to take charge of it which will be the best way as he will know better about money matters than I do. The Lairds are riding around this winter at a great rate. Rob acts as if his purse had no bottom to it but I fear he will find out his mistake perhaps too late.

Cos Maria finished her school at W. Barnet week before last. She came out here last Thursday and stopped till today. William came out after her. They are all well. Matthew seems to be fading. I fear you may never see him again—if he lives many years more there will probably be a great change in him. Lizzie will finish her school this week. She and Maria will write you a letter as soon as they get home together which will not be until after that much expected wedding. You will hear all about it as soon as it comes off.

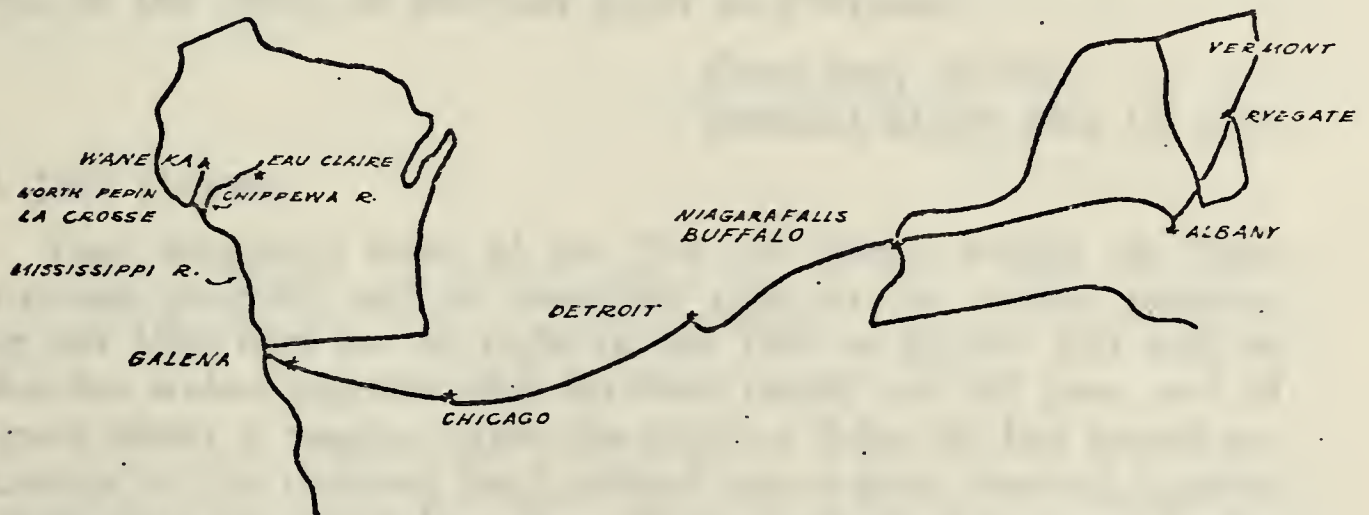
It is very sickly at W. Barnet—Fevers—Cankers—Rash—and many kinds of diseases prevail. Abram Dow died last Friday. There are hardly well ones enough to take care of the sick.

The reader will note that Vermont school ma'am's salary in 1852 was two dollars and sixpence per week.

These letters too tell of the eagerness of men to get to California and seek for gold.

After a period of about 18 years spent in Vermont, the Dicksons find themselves leaving for Wisconsin. The daughter Agnes had fallen in love with Azro Slye and he was leaving for the West and true to their clannish trait the family went too. Robert had died, John had settled in Maine and George had gone to Connecticut. Mary had married Wm. Whitcher; Archibald had married Janet Gibson and Agnes the youngest was engaged to Azro Slye. The father and mother are approaching seventy and it is the younger generation now which has the urge to seek the "greener pastures". Many other Vermonters had the same urge.

In the spring of 1855 the son Thomas at home and not married, and Daniel Azro Slye leave for Wisconsin. In the fall the father, mother, and daughter Agnes started for the West. Near Niagara Falls while the "train was going at high speed" (at very low speed according to our modern trains) Grandfather, who was standing on the rear platform fell from the train. They were delayed two weeks and he was always lame after that fall. They went by R.R. to Galena the end of the R.R., then by boat to North Pepin where Agnes Dickson



In 1855 the John Dickson family left Ryegate, Vermont for Waneka, Wisconsin. was married to Mr. Slye by Judge O'Connor, then on to Waneka where they settled. There was quite a settlement of Scotch Vermonters around Lake Pepin.

When one sees the rocky hills of Vermont he can understand how alluring the prospect of a farm in Wisconsin must have appeared.

The village of Eau Claire, Wisconsin at this time had a population of about 100 people. It was a mill town; there were no stores, no trains, and only ten or twelve houses.

At Waneka it was still a wilderness where the growl of the black bear and the howling of wolf packs was a reality.

A Harrison Dodge, long a vital part of the Waneka settlement, bought 300 acres of land from the Government at \$1.25 per acre. His deed was signed by Abraham Lincoln and perhaps the Dicksons and Whitchers did the same thing. We do know that Arch. Dickson bought 80 acres from Mr. Dodge,

as Mr. Dodge thought that "the Dicksons would be good neighbors".

The family could well have been discouraged this their first year in Wisconsin, for late June frosts and a severe drought in the summer made things difficult for the settlers.

Mr. Whitcher was a conductor on the B. C. and M. R.R. and did not settle on a farm until 1859.

In the spring of the following year the family receives word of the death of the son John in Portland.

Casco Iron Works,
Portland, Maine, May 19, 1856

Mr. John Dickson:

Your daughter's letter of the 21st. of March, mailed the 26th. I received yesterday and do cheerfully reply at the earliest moment, your son John died on the night of the 18th of March. His wife or rather his widow together with her little family are still here, and all in good health at present. After the death of John she had several applications for the children, but I advised her to keep them all together at least until she heard from you. In the meantime the men in the shop where John worked would assist her and perhaps put her in a way to get a living for herself and family; the company agreed to let her have a house rent free if she would take some of the men to board and she cheerfully accepted she as now got some five or six Boarders how she will get along remains to be seen under the present high price of provisions as she only commenced with the first of this month. The oldest boy Alexander, I have taken into the shop and am having him to run one of the Steam Hammers for which we pay him 50 cents per day and when able to learn more we then of course will pay him more. The girl Jessie assists her mother in the management of the house. (In John's letter from Scotland he said that he had named the boy John and the girl Sarah after the grandparents; perhaps the mother gave them the names Alexander and Jessie).

You ask how long they have been living here in Portland, they came here the first of August last from Dorchester, Mass. John was doing very well until he was taken sick and was making big calculations on what he was going to do this summer. He was going to save up all that he could possible in order to come and settle down amongst you. There are quite a number of men in the shop that are Westward bound this coming Fall and I think their talk had somewhat given John the Western fever.

I have some thoughts of coming into Wisconsin about the first of next month. If I should I will call and see you. One of our men has purchased in Dunn County some 40 acres, he starts for the West in two weeks, his name is Robert Hall.

I am not satisfied in my mind what the complaint was that carried John out of this world neither do I think that either of the Doctors who attended him knew the exact nature of the disease; the last one that was called in said that he had an old complaint on him and that Typhoid fever set in which was the cause of his death.

The widow and children desire to be remembered to you all. She would like you to write her. Direct your letter Mrs. Agnes Dickson, Portland, Maine.

Very Respectfully,

Yours,

W. A. Mosely

The families of these two brothers who died, Robert in Poughkeepsie and John in Portland have been lost to the other Dicksons in spite of much effort to locate them.

The little settlement at Waneka was soon to become an established community. The next year after the Dicksons came the first organized school in Dunn County outside Menomonie was established. This first board building was used only during the summer months. The next building was a log school, 16 x 24 with crude desks and slates. The building was used for church services and for a voting booth.

The group which left Scotland in the spring of 1837 is still together although they are living in homes of their own. George is the only living member of the family who has not yet become a part of this close group; he is in Connecticut where he has married and is raising his family.

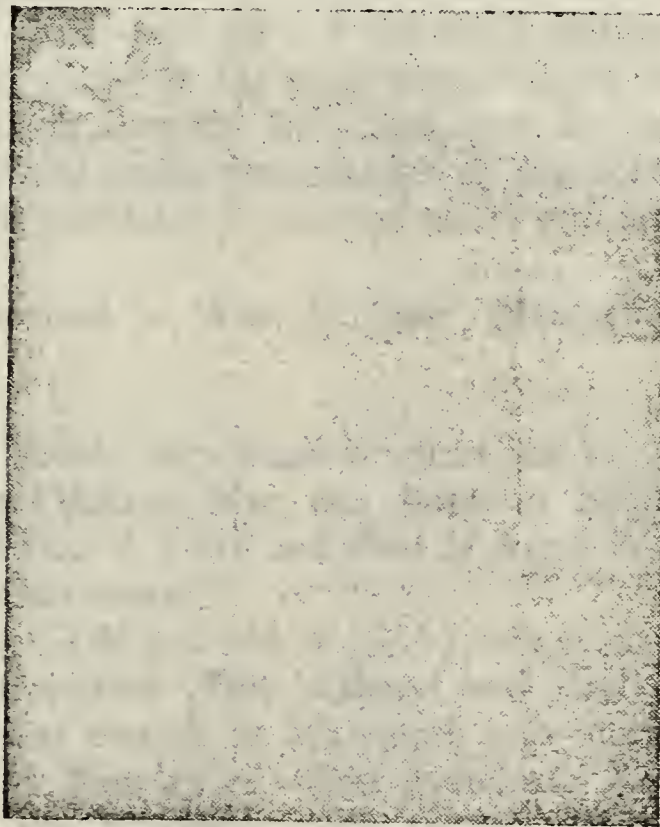
CHAPTER VI

THE CONNECTICUT YEARS

In 1839 George Dickson was working at Poughkeepsie. In 1841 he had located in Connecticut.

The Dicksons in Scotland were weavers; it was natural that he found employment in textile mills. At Tariffville he was a foreman or supervisor in a Brussels Carpet Factory, which was a thriving industry until destroyed by fire in 1867.

On Dec. 4, 1841 he married Jane Turnbull who was born in Paisley, Scotland, January 28, 1821. Jane, the daughter of James Turnbull, was the youngest of ten children.



James Turnbull of Tariffville, Conn.,
was the grandfather of John Dickson
of Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

James Turnbull was born in Paisley, Scotland, June 22, 1795 and died April 26, 1861, aged 66 years. He was a farmer who lived and is buried at Tariffville, Connecticut. His death was due to "congestion of the lungs". His wife was a Jane Adam whom he married in Scotland. She died Sept. 20, 1858, aged 55 years and is buried at Tariffville.

Markers in the Tariffville cemetery are as follows:

Mary, daughter of James and Jane—died May 5, 1856, Age 21 yrs.

The records at Simsbury state that death was due to consumption.

Elizabeth, daughter of James and Jane died Dec. 9, 1856, Age 21 yrs.

James, son of James and Sarah (This name must be an error) 2 yrs. and 10 mo., 1856.

The other children of James and Jane were:

James—he had no children.

John—not known whether he had children. There are Turnbulls at Manchester, Conn., these may have come from this line.

Katherine—married to Mr. Clarke. They lived out of Tariffville in a house built in 1765 and owned by the family for 78 yrs. (this was in 1931 when John Dickson and his daughter Lyla Flagler called on the cousins Jennie Clarke Thurston and Libbie Clarke, daughters of Katherine. This house has been restored by a Mr. and Mrs. Cosmos, Tariffville Road, who purchased the home after the deaths of the cousins in 1936 and 1939.) In 1931 Libbie Clarke told us how well she remembered the time when, during the Civil War, George Dickson came to visit them and how he coughed during the night. She said she could never forget it. He contracted Tuberculosis in the Army and later, at the age of 25 yrs. died at Waneka, Wisconsin.

Margaret Turnbull—married to Wm. C. Case. Margaret was born in Scotland.

Ellen—did not marry.

Agnes—married Giles Smith—not known where she is.

Jane—married George Dickson, she was born in Scotland Jan. 28, 1821, was married Dec. 4, 1841 and died at Amy, Wisconsin, 1874.

Katherine Clarkes children were:

Jennie Clarke Thurston (86 yrs. old in 1931), whose daughters are:

Mrs. Humphries (Her husband was Arch-deacon of the Episcopal church of Maryland, now deceased)

Mrs. Wm. Rowley of West Hartford. For information about the Turnbulls write to Mrs. Wm. Rowley, 220 Terry Road, West Hartford.

Mrs. Leon Broadhurst, Hartford, Conn.

Libbie Clarke—did not marry (83 years old in 1931)

Margaret Case's children were:

Judge Wm. S. Case whose grandson John R. Case, 252 Sisson Ave., is a City Hall reporter for the Hartford Times. He graduated from the U. of Minn. in 1927. His father died many years ago.

Judge Theodore Case, whose son Theodore S. Case is Clerk of Court of Common Pleas, Hartford. Theodore lives at Granby, Conn.

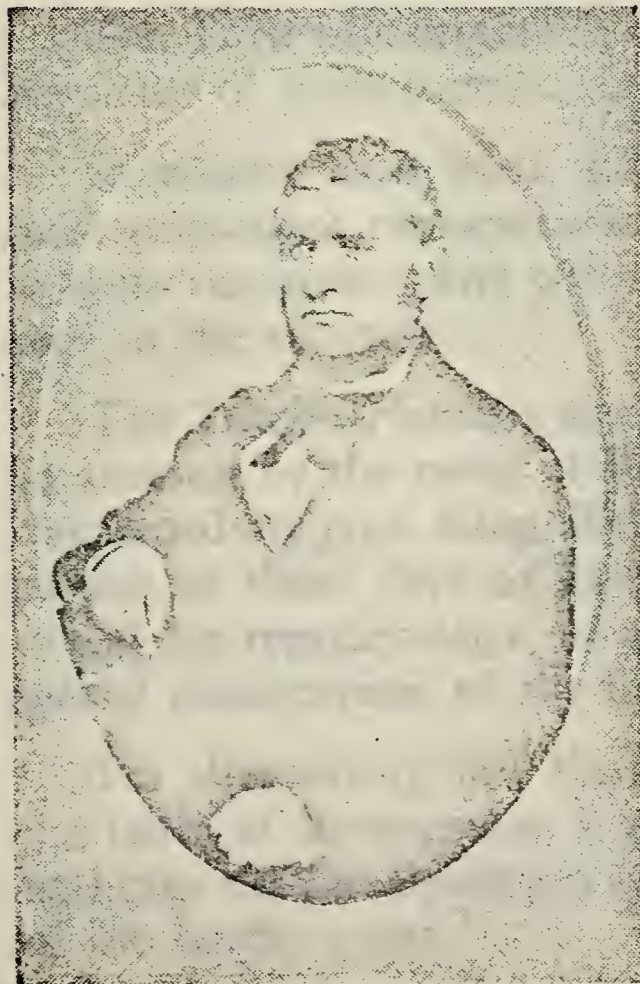
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Great, great grandmother Adam,
mother of Jane Adam Turnbull.



Jane Adam Turnbull wife of James
Turnbull and mother of Jane Turn-
bull who married George Dickson.



James Turnbull father of James
Turnbull.



Elizabeth Turnbull sister of Jane
Turnbull Dickson.



These Scottish families brought to America a pattern of gracious living which the hardships endured by the pioneers did not destroy.

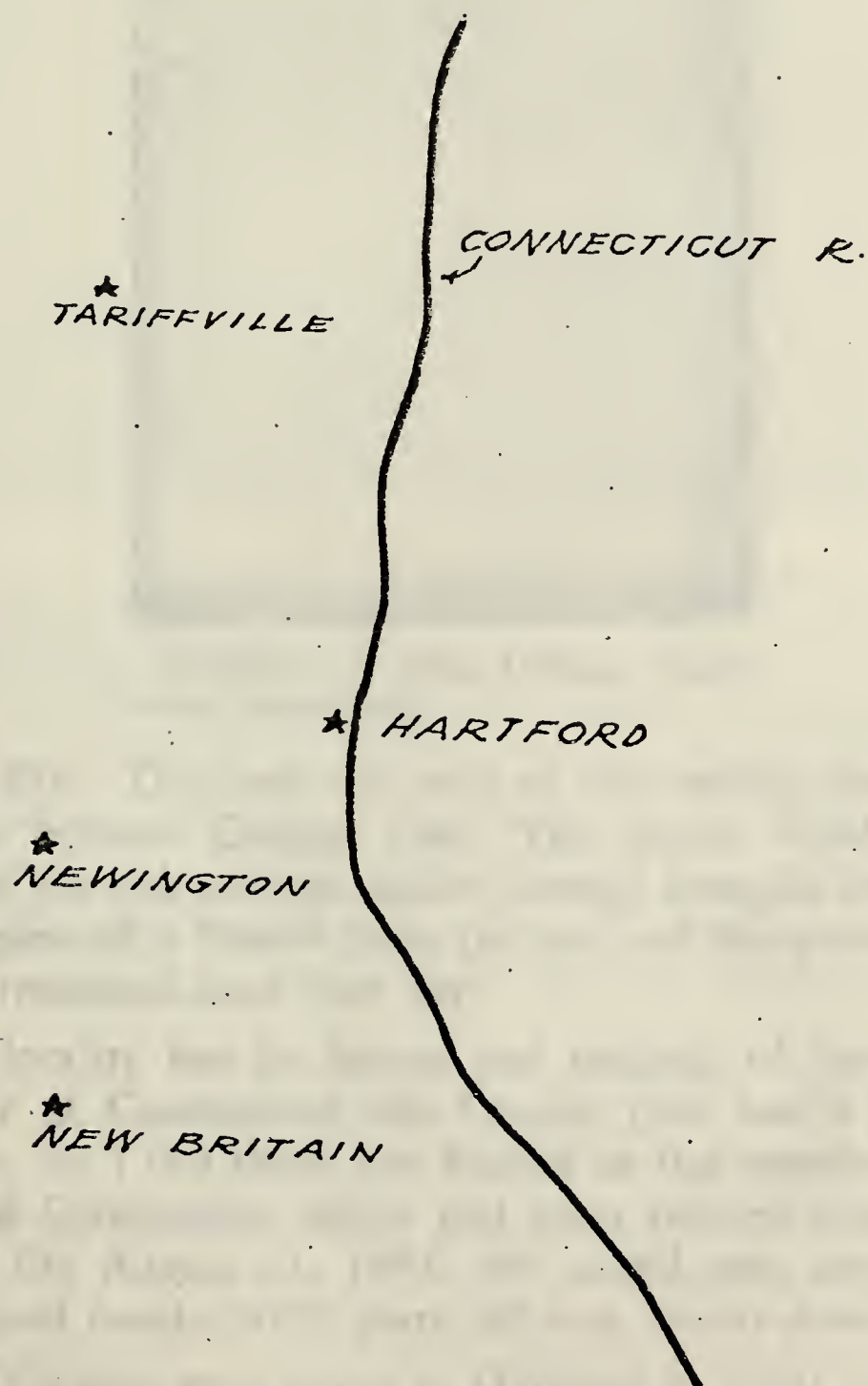
The Turnbulls originally were from the North of Scotland but many of them came to the industrial area around Glasgow.

In remote days when surnames were becoming fixed the most prominent characteristics of our ancestors were attached to these surnames. Any outstanding act or distinctive trait was used in the surname.

The Turnbull name was acquired in the 14th Century when an ancestor by the name of Rule turned a ferocious bull which threatened to gore King Robert I (The Bruce). It was the custom in those days to give an individual a surname which would be representative of some special deed of bravery or special characteristic of the individual.

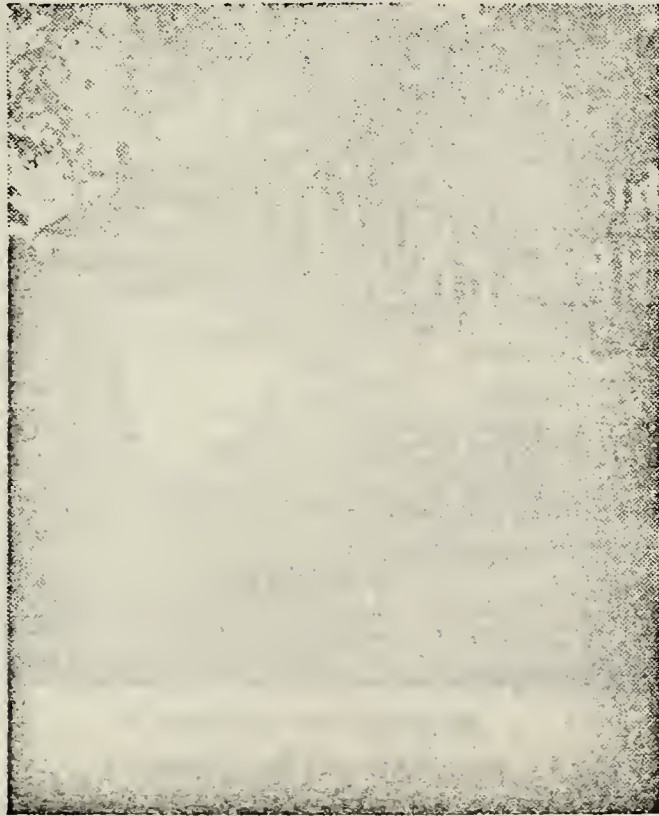
For thus saving the King's life Rule obtained a grant of the lands of Bedrule and a new name—Turnbull. The Turnbull clan has the reputation of being among the most turbulent of the border clans.

In Florida the name Turnbull is of some historic interest. On the East coast of Florida is a small city called New Smyrna, one of the oldest locations on the coast. It was once the home of the English Lord Turnbull, "who seems to be famous for breaking his promise to the natives of Majorica in the Mediterranean Sea making them slaves instead of land owners." The wall of Turnbull's Castle is still there or was until recent years, so it is said.



Towns in which George Dickson lived and worked while in Connecticut 1841-1862.

In Connecticut, the George Dickson family lived at various places during their twenty-two year period there. They lived in Tarriffville until after 1848, for in May of that year John Dickson was born. At various times they lived at Hartford, New Britain, and Newington. They were living at Hart-

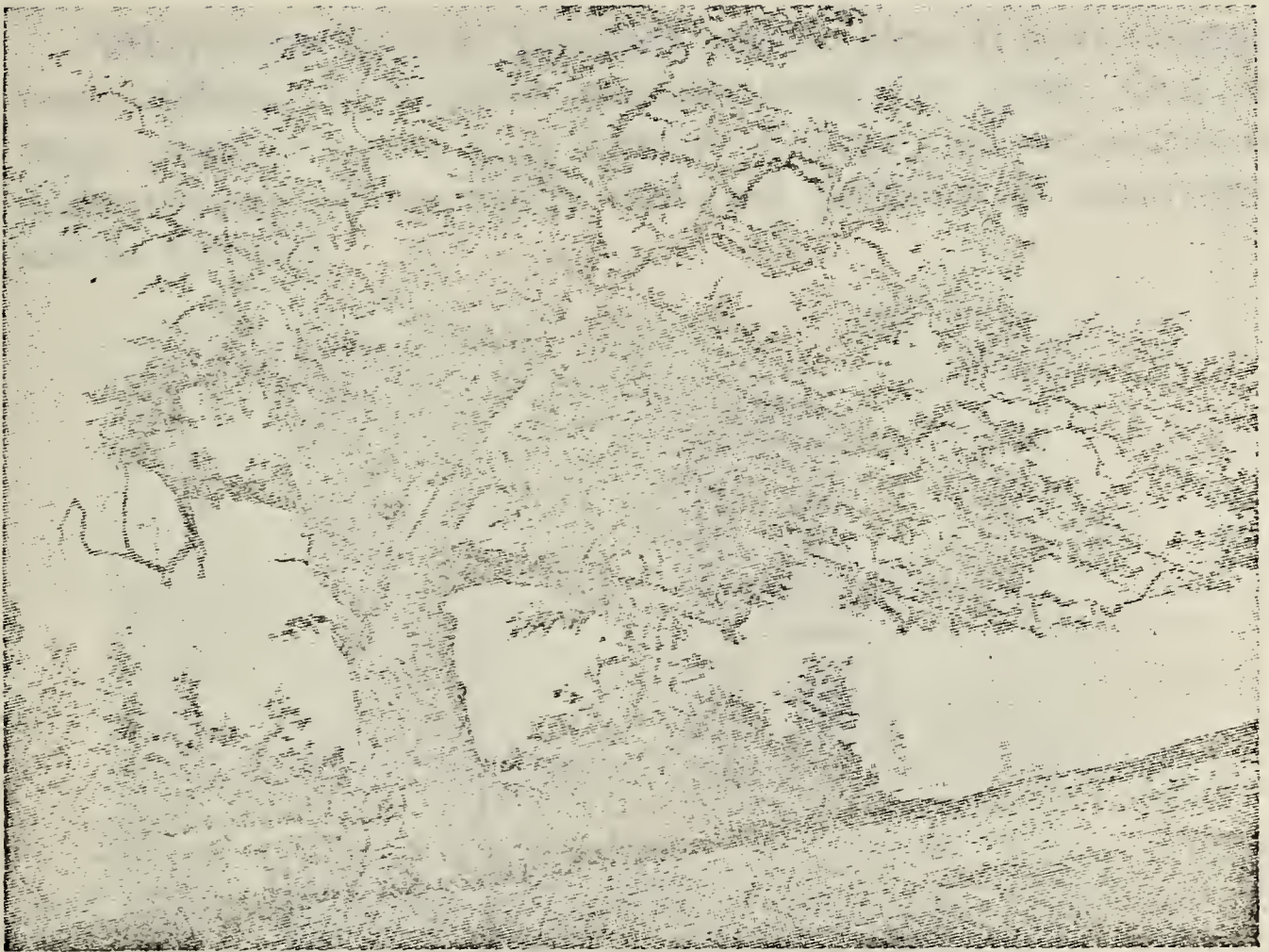


Birthplace of John Dickson, Tarriffville, Connecticut.

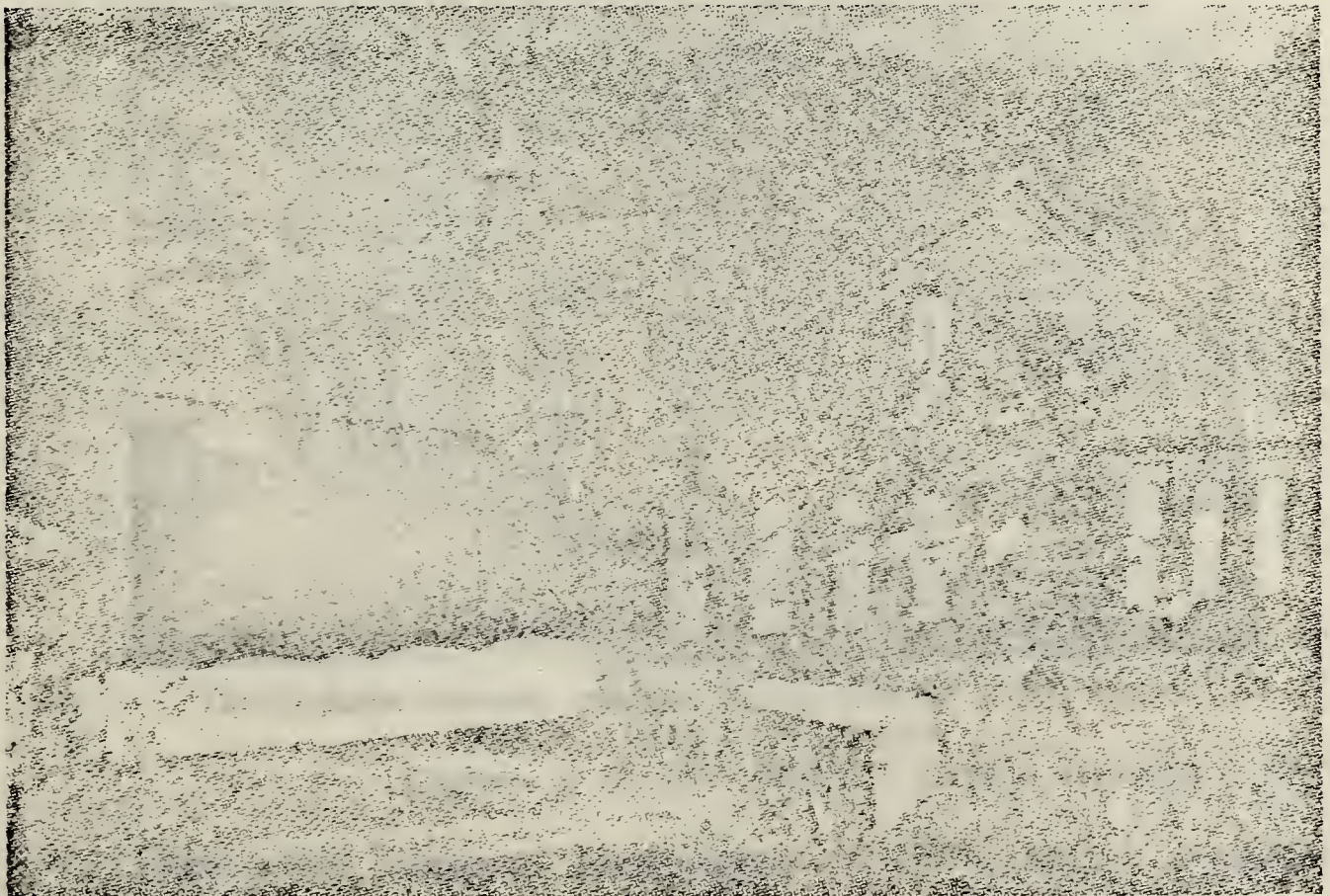
ford in 1856. This was the year of the terrific storm which felled the beloved Charter Oak. The family lived near the location of the oak and the father George brought home to his family a piece of a branch from the oak and this piece of wood has been treasured since that day.

Each locality has its heroes and symbols of loyalties. To the people of Connecticut, the Charter Oak was a symbol of patriotism. In 1789 there was hidden in this massive oak, the Charter of Connecticut which had been rescued from Andros in 1687. On August 21, 1856 this sacred tree, seven feet in diameter and nearly 1000 years old was blown down.

The Dicksons were living in Hartford in 1860 when Abraham Lincoln was running for the Presidency of the United States and John saw Lincoln in a torch light parade.



A symbol of freedom.
Courtesy of the Secretary of the State of Connecticut



Old Brussels Mill Tariffville where George Dickson was
employed in a supervisory capacity.

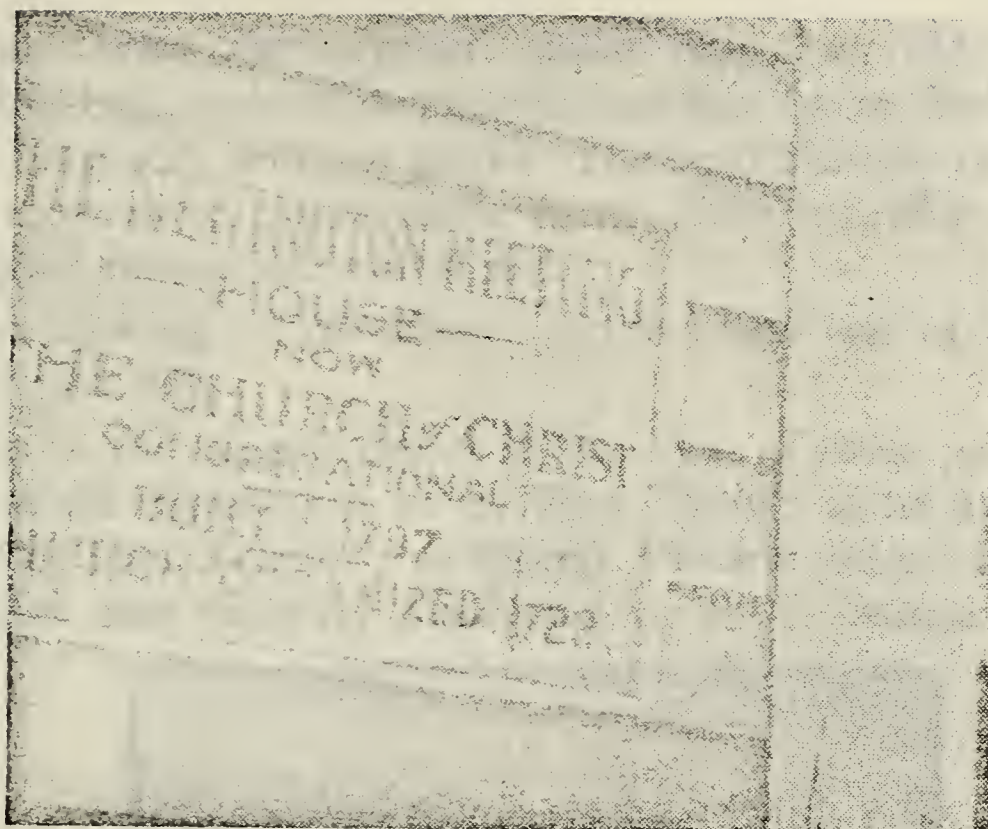
When they lived at Hartford and at New Britain George was employed in factories manufacturing fire arms. One of these factories was a Colt factory. George had an excellent understanding of machinery and held positions as supervisor and as foreman.



The Dickson children attended Sunday School at this church when they lived in Newington.

Courtesy of the Rev. Harold C. Burdon, Newington, Conn.

They were living at Newington in 1861 and it was here that one of the sons, George, enlisted for the Civil War.



George and Jane Dickson were the parents of eleven children. Nine were born in Connecticut and two were born in Wisconsin.

These children were:

| | | Born at | Died |
|------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|
| John | Tariffville | Jan. 2, 1843 | May 4, 1843 |
| James T. | Windsor | April 10, 1844 | May 10, 1864 |
| George T. | Saxonville, Mass. | Sept. 9, 1845 | 1870 |
| John | Tariffville | May 19, 1848 | March 8, 1942 |
| Jane | Tariffville | Oct. 19, 1850 | June 27, 1874 |
| Henry P. | Tariffville | March 23, 1853 | January 31, 1932 |
| Herbert S. | Hartford | Nov. 24, 1855 | Sept. 21, 1857 |
| Herbert S. | Newington | April 26, 1858 | 1872 |
| Sarah Jane | Newington | April 10, 1860 | July 8, 1902 |
| Mary Helen | Spring Brook, Wis. | Oct. 9, 1862 | Aug. 15, 1900 |
| James H. | " " " | July 26, 1866 | Sept. 1868 |

The life of the family was rigid, circumspect, and dominated by the "Blue Laws". The term "Blue Laws" was used to describe the pattern for the standard of living which the leaders in early Connecticut thought best and many rigid laws were passed and enforced, especially those prohibiting dancing, entertainment and sports on Sunday.

These were the days of carpet bags (an old fashioned travelling bag made of carpeting), candles, harps, Seth Thomas clocks, fireplaces, and hay stacks. The Seth Thomas clocks were metal movement clocks made from 1786 to 1859 and were introduced throughout the world.

The viewing of panoramic pictures was one of the diversions of the day.

One of the biggest events in the lives of these young Dicksons was the opportunity to see Tom Thumb, as he was known; "General Tom Thumb", as Queen Victoria called him. This little man was masterly publicized by P. T. Barnum founder



Tom Thumb and his wife, Lavinia.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

of the "Biggest Show On Earth". Thumb's real name was Charles S. Stratton; a little boy of four, in 1842 he was living in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Three years after Barnum found

him he was so famous 10,000 persons and two brass bands came to the dock to wish him "Bon Voyage" for his first European tour. He was 31 inches tall and weighed less than 30 pounds. He was not married when the Dicksons lived in Connecticut but on Feb. 10, 1863 he was married to Lavinia Warren of Middleboro, Mass. She was also a midget and a protege of Barnum's. They had a magnificent home in Bridgeport where they lived for twenty happy years.

During these years which George and his family spent in Connecticut, his remaining brothers and sisters were happily settled and prospering on their neighboring Wisconsin farms. The close family tie which had always existed was still there and naturally George longed to be settled near his six brothers and sisters.

In April of 1862, George and his family leave for Wisconsin. For Jane it was not easy as all of her brothers and sisters lived in Connecticut.

CHAPTER VII

THE CALL OF THE CLAN

Seven years after the Dicksons in Vermont left for Wisconsin, George Dickson and his family left Connecticut to rejoin the "clan" in Wisconsin.

At this time Lincoln was President, the Civil War was in progress, they were making straw effigies and burning them in vacant lots and one of George's children, George, was in the service of his country. George was just past sixteen and it is not surprising that his aunt from Wisconsin wrote to his parents asking "why did you let him do it".

The Dickson family when it left for the West consisted of seven members, the father George, the mother Jane, the children James (1844), John (1848), Jane (1850), Henry (1855), Sarah (1860). They left Connecticut April 6, 1862. The trip would take about a week. Sufficient food had to be taken to feed seven people three times a day for seven days; that meant a total of about one hundred and forty-seven individual meals.

George's brother Thomas Dickson and his sister Agnes Dickson Sly had written to George giving directions for the trip.

Waneka, March 2nd., 1862

Dear Brother and Sister:

I received your letter yesterday and was glad to hear from you. It has been some time since we have heard from you and we began to think that you had given up coming. We are sorry that you have not been able to get work it must be bad times in the East we feel the effects of the hard times here but they are getting a little better all kinds of grain is coming up a little and it is generally thought wheat will come up by the time navigation opens it has been the hardest times that we have had since we have been out here. Last year the wheat crop was not even half a crop and the price so small that the farmers came out short.

Now the time for you to start will be the 7th of April it would be better if you could start sooner but we are afraid the river will not be open and it will be bad if you should be detained on account

of the river not being open; the best way for you to come is by Suspension Bridge, and Detroit to Chicago; from Chicago to Milwaukee and from Milwaukee to LaCrosse that is on the Mississippi River, then by Steam Boat to Rumsay's Landing on the Chippewa River, that is five miles from us. I don't know exactly how much it will cost you to get here. It cost Charlotte Clough 44 dollars to come from New Hampshire and it will probably cost you about the same. You ought to start your things two weeks before you start yourself so as to get them here by the time you get here yourself.

You want to mark your goods Rumsey's landing, Dunn County, Wisconsin via Milwaukee and LaCrosse Railroad. You can bring a good sized trunk for each whole ticket so you can bring considerable with you; about your stove you had better sell it if you can get near what it is worth. You must put your goods in good strong boxes and put strap iron around them; bring what milk pans you have; get through tickets as far as LaCrosse; inquire at the ticket Office the fare to St. Paul and if it is less than it is to LaCrosse, you had better get tickets to St. Paul and take the Steam Boat at LaCrosse the same as though you had a ticket to LaCrosse. Some times you can get a ticket to St. Paul for less than LaCrosse.

T. Dickson

Dear Brother and Sister

I thought of a few things that I must mention in regards to your coming out one thing is you must cook quite a quantity of provisions to eat on the way you have a large family and it will take considerable, we would have nearly starved it we had not taken plenty with us. Jane, you want to boil a nice piece of beef or some chickens if you prefer; make plenty of biscuit and butter, fruit pies and doughnuts; you want a piece of cheese you do not want much sweet cake as it will make you thirsty. If you want your tea or coffee you can take a tin dish of some kind and when the cars stop you can run out and buy whatever quantity you want that is the way we all have done you will find it not only a great saving but a great convenience you would be nearly starved half of the time. I mention the above because it is commonly practiced, high or low, all bring their provisions. If you start on Monday morning, you should reach us by Saturday if you have good luck. When you get to LaCrosse get a Chippewa Boat if you can and that will save your changing at Reed's Landing. When you arrive at Rumsay's Landing if you do not find any of us there inquire for Mud Creek and start one of the Boys for Slye or Dickson and we will take the team and come down after you, don't hire a team.

In regard to packing you must be very particular pack just as solid as you can, if you have a good churn you can pack it full and it is light

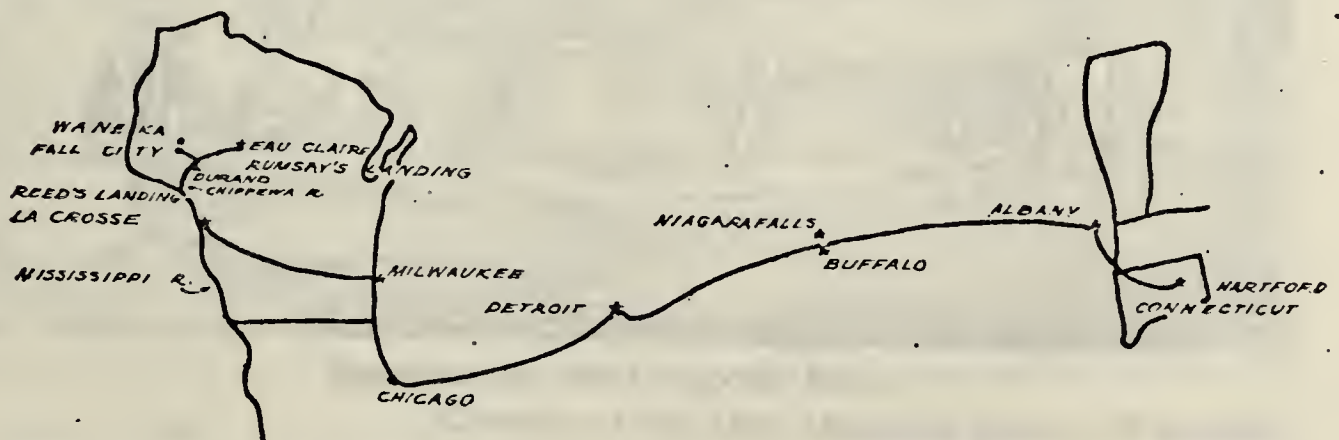
and will save you buying a great many little things one can put in that don't weigh much. Bring all your Crockery it is high here be very particular and pack them so that they will not break you can bring a great deal with your being so many of you, if you do not have trunks enough make boxes that will do just as well I believe each one is allowed 100 lbs. per ticket all you can take with you will save paying freight on; bring of course all your beds and bedding.

This is my birthday 30 years old how old that seems, 3 children one a great big boy five years old; little Grace is walking all round by the help of chairs and lounge expect she will walk in a few weeks. We have a great quantity of snow this winter and today we are having a severe snow storm one year ago today the roads were like a river all splash. Father is as well as usual sits beside the stove dandling Grace on his knee. Thomas is lying on the lounge reading, Azro is going to pop some corn Willie and Mary are helping him. Mary and family are all well oh she has such a great fat baby. Arch and family are well Jannet keeps quite well. I am sorry George is going off he is too young to leave his mother. Why did you give your consent? The army is such a wicked place. I will close by hoping to see you all soon and wishing you a prosperous journey. With love from all, I remain,

Your Affectionate Sister, Agnes D. Slye

The Agnes Slye who wrote the above letter was postmistress at Waneka for many years.

The family was to come up the Chippewa River to Fall City and then by "lumber wagon" to the Slye's at Waneka, a distance of about three miles.

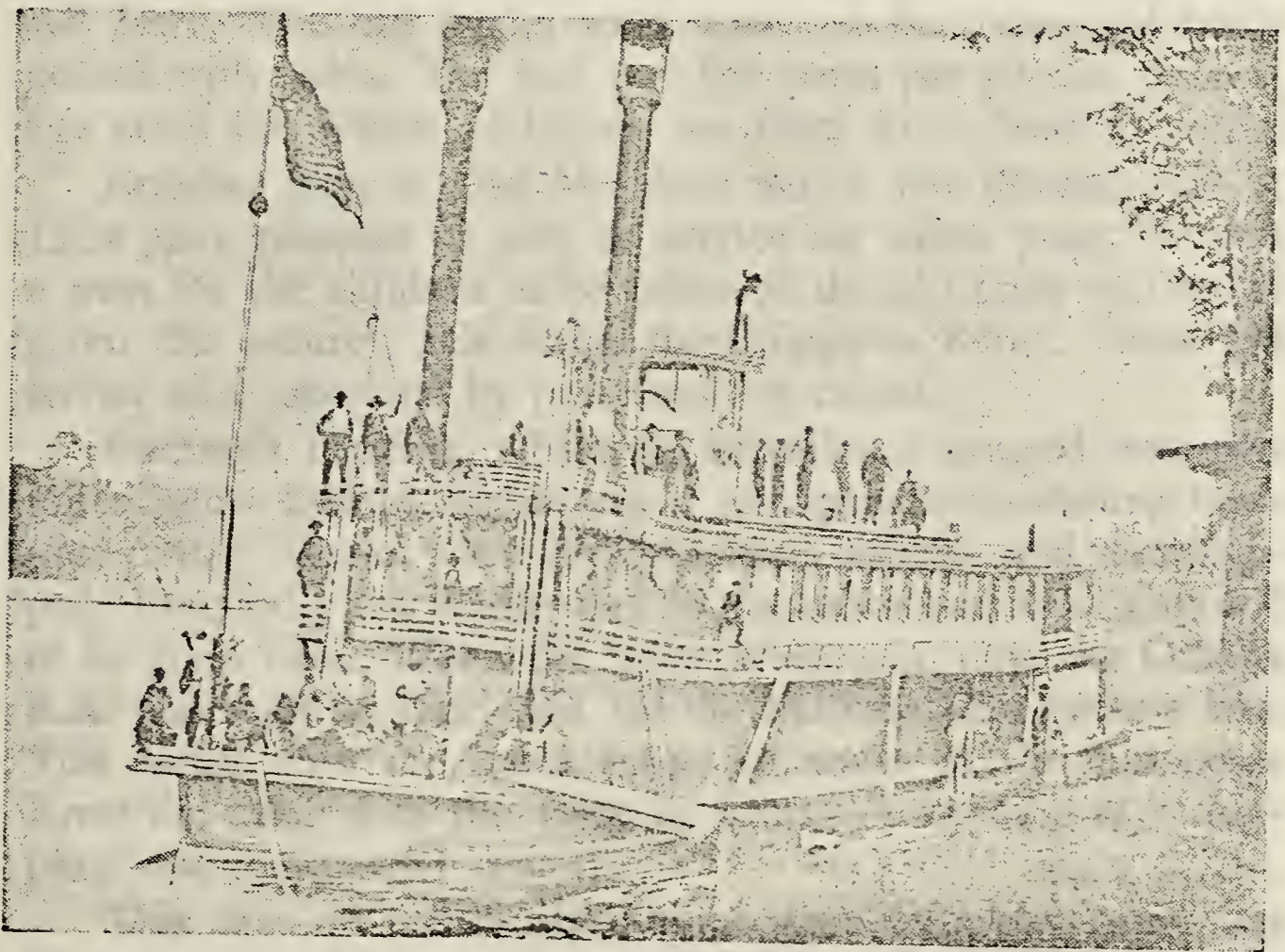


In 1862 John Dickson's son George and his family left Hartford, Connecticut for Waneka, Wisconsin.

The account of the trip to Wisconsin was related by John Dickson on his eightieth birthday. (May 19, 1928). "We left Connecticut the sixth of April and arrived in Wisconsin

the fourteenth, eight days later, coming by rail to LaCrosse, from which place we came by boat to Reed's Landing, where we had to stay overnight because the ice was not out of the Chippewa River; then we took the boat up to Rumsay's Landing, then we went from there to the Dickson settlement by ox-team and lumber wagon. We arrived in Waneka and stayed there about a year, then settled on the homestead at Elk Creek.

On the trip west Henry was taken with what we thought was diphtheria and we had to stop off at the depot at Albany and father went out to get a Doctor and we thought he was lost. The Doctor said that Henry had the croup and as he was better the next day we continued the trip.



Steamboat on the Chippewa River.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

We all stayed up all night, the whole caboodle. At LaCrosse we took the boat in the night and as there were no lights on the dock father slipped through the planks and fell down below, and we thought he went into the river, but he was not hurt. That night we slept on the floor of the boat.

When we arrived at Rumsay's Landing there was no one to meet us because the boat was a day late and the Slys had gone back home, so father and I started out on foot for Waneka. We inquired the way to Fall City when we arrived at a black-smith shop and they said 'why you are in Fall City now'. There was nothing but one house and the blacksmith shop. They told us how to get to Waneka. On the way we met the Slys coming to meet us. We passed through Durand which was nothing but a row of white shanties along the river. There was no bridge over the river and no ferry except at Rumsays Landing and Eau Claire."

At Rumsay's Landing John and H. T. Rumsay owned a toll ferry. The old ferries were scows or flat bottomed boats guided with poles. The fare was five cents per person, twenty-five cents for a team of horses, ten cents for a head of cattle.

Another ferry at Old Meridean which was discontinued in 1938 gave pleasure as well as service for many years. It was a treat for the children to be taken to the old ferry and to be given this leisurely ride across the Chippewa River. These old ferries were operated by poles and by cables.

Rumsay's Landing, where the steamboats stopped, was two miles below Old Meridean and it was quite a flourishing business center. Grains were brought here, milled, sold and shipped. Practically the whole area to the north and west disposed of its grain here. When the West Wisconsin, now the Omaha R.R. was built in 1868 and '69 the business here became less. This factor with the lower stages of water in the Chippewa River did away with the value of Rumsay's Landing as a shipping and commercial center.

This area to which the Connecticut Dicksons came has been mentioned in an old letter of Agnes Barland's when she was teaching at the Waneka school and boarding with the Slye family. May 30, 1863 she wrote that she "drove with Mr. Slye to Fall City three miles distant and had a most charming ride through most beautiful country."

To return to John Dickson's account of the family arrival in Wisconsin he says "When we arrived at Waneka we went

directly to my uncle's house. Four uncles were the first settlers in that section. For our first meal there we had cornmeal mush and milk, and every time I took a spoonful I could smell the salt-rising bread which they were baking and it made me feel worse than some of the odors of the boat." Salt rising bread was a bread of the pioneers; it was a dough which contained some cornmeal and which was made light by the wild yeasts from the air; one might say it was spoiled dough. The salt was added to destroy some of the wild organisms and because it did destroy some of the organisms it required a longer time to rise. The bread when baked had a desirable "nutty" flavor in spite of the disagreeable odor given off during rising. In some localities salt rising bread is a treat and commands a high price per loaf.

John continues with his story: "We were a hundred miles from the nearest railroad. Our Grandmother Sarah Dickson had died in 1860 but Grandfather John was living with the Slyes. When his family came out from Vermont in 1855 while standing on the back platform of the train he fell off and was always lame after that.

Here in Wisconsin we saw our first prairie chickens. We had always thought prairie chickens were like other chickens and laid eggs hence we were much surprised when we found them in the trees with the birds. At that time Wisconsin was a wheat growing state and during the ploughing the prairie chickens would roost in the furrows. Wheat was the main food crop at that time."

The early settlers in a new country lived in a world of daily discoveries. John or "Johnny" as he was called was a boy of fourteen who had been brought up in the closer confines of the industrial areas of Connecticut. He was thrilled with the joys and terrors of woods and prairies. Contact with bears, Indians, and wolves was a frightening possibility.

A lifelong friend of John's was his boyhood friend and companion, Horace Jones or "Hod" Jones as he was always called. To continue with John's diary: "Hod Jones and I made one man, the two of us, in following the reaper. Hod

and I were old chums and worked together in the fields. We worked like that all through the harvest time that first summer, then in the winter we went to school at the little red school house. We went to school six months during the year."

In another year this boy of fourteen was to become the head of the family with his father and two older brothers off to fight in the Civil War.

In the seven years since the first Dicksons came to Wisconsin the village of Eau Claire had grown rapidly the population had increased ten fold, there were more mills, there were stores, blacksmith shops, newspapers, churches.



WANEKA SCHOOL

An example of an early one room school house.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WANeka YEARS

And now the "clan" is reunited at Waneka. George and his family; Archibald and his family; brother Thomas; Agnes and her husband, Azro Sly; Mary and her husband Wm. Whitcher; and the Grandfather John. The Grandmother Sarah Johnstone Dickson died in 1860. The two other breaks in the family circle were the brother Robert who died in Poughkeepsie and the brother John who died in Portland and who from then on were the "Lost Brothers"; as the young widows did not keep in touch with the Dicksons, and no word has come from their families since that time.

The brothers and sisters at Waneka had nice farms with large white houses and, living as they did so near each other, they had very pleasant comfortable lives.

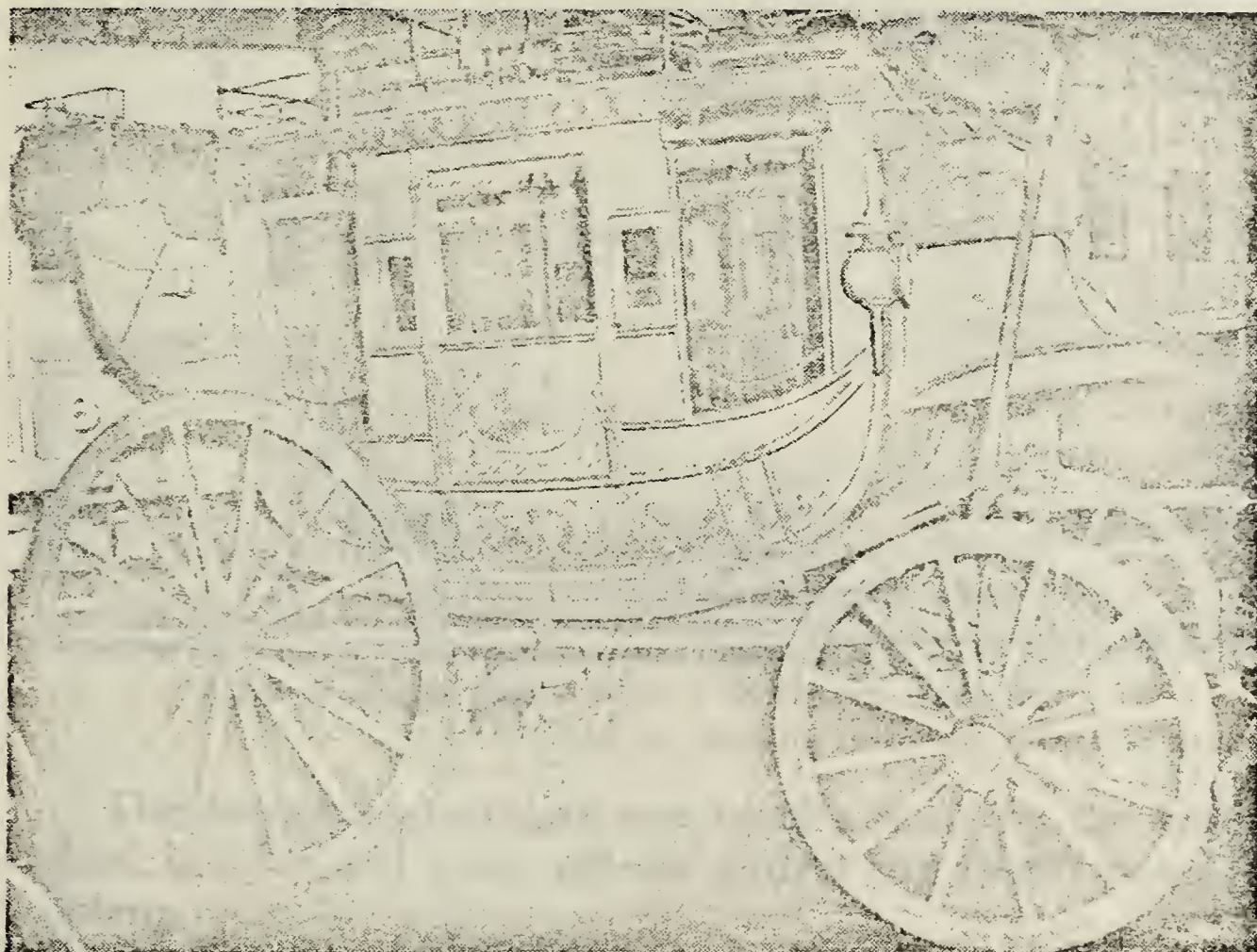
Agnes Barland the teacher boarded at the Slyes and wrote of organizing a Sunday School. Uncle Thomas Dickson was the Sunday School Superintendent much or all of the time.

The teacher closes one of her letters by saying that her "candle was going out". She wrote that she liked the Slyes but that the children were like "thunder and lightning—getting into everything." She also mentioned her new "Garibaldi waist." This was a blouse very similar to the long sleeved high necked blouse worn today.

The Post Office was at the Slyes and Aunt Agnes Slye was the Postmistress.

They were 100 miles from the nearest Railroad. The stage coach line from Sparta to Hudson was running in 1856. It required one week to go and one week to return. Later, during the Civil War, a daily coach each day, one going and one coming, meant that two coaches passed through Waneka each day. They had closed coaches from Sparta to Menomonie and open coaches from Menomonie to Hudson because larger coaches could not get through the dense forests. It required 18 hours to go from Eau Claire to Hudson. The line had one

stop on the trip and that was at Waneka. A hotel was kept to accommodate overnight visitors and to provide a place to serve food to the tired and hungry travelers. Uncle Azro Syle ran this stopping place. The largest coach held 12 passengers. The fare from Menomonie to Hudson was \$2. The salary of the stage coach driver was \$28 per month and board.

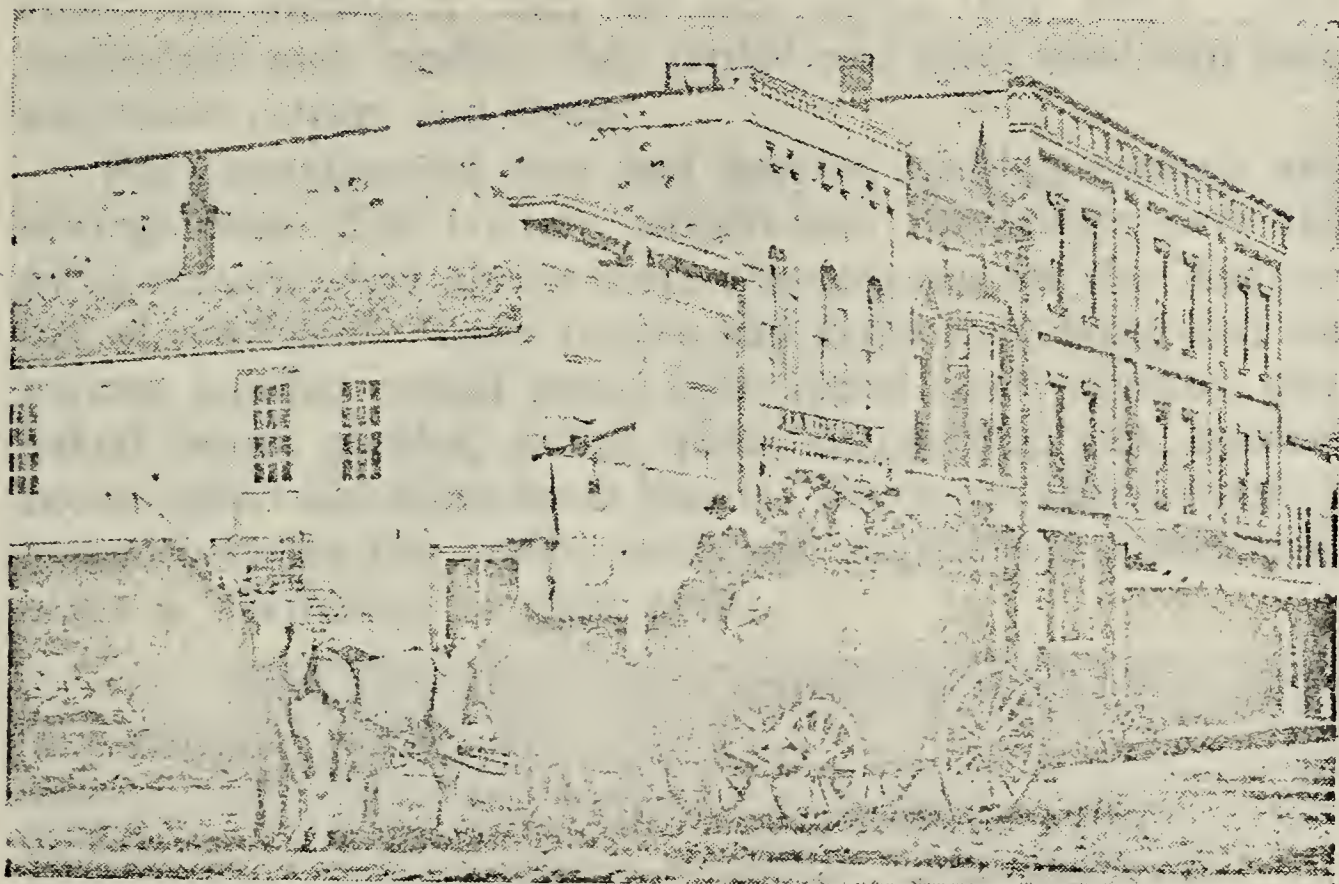


STAGE COACH

Courtesy of the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan

The price of land in these days was cheap. An 80 acre farm could be purchased for \$70. In 1918 this land was valued at \$100 an acre. Wheat was the principle crop and sold for \$.90 to \$1.00 a bushel. Wheat was their only crop to sell and sometimes that crop was lost because of the "chintz" bugs. The farmer would go out in the fields in the morning and look for the bugs; if there, the field of wheat would begin to turn yellow and in a day or two it would all turn white and be ruined. The grasshoppers too were a menace. Sometimes they would be in such thick masses that they

would shut off the sun. Where there were railroads the trains might not be able to run because the grasshoppers were so thick on the tracks.



One of the last stage coaches in Wisconsin about 1870.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

The household furniture was usually made by the father; tables, benches and beds. All the settlers had Dutch ovens for cooking.

In the Fall cattle and pigs were butchered and the meat cut up and frozen for winter. With the coming of Spring thaws and the possibility that the meat might spoil, they would fry or boil the meat put it in a stone jar and cover it with hot fat. They would use some of their beef in mince meat.

They raised everything which they ate and had good gardens and chickens. The young farmer seeking the hand of a favored damsel could assure his future bride that she would have plenty to eat and to wear. They picked wild raspberries, blackberries and blueberries. They did not can food but they dried and salted and pickled. Dried corn had a flavor most

delectable. They had salt pork, baked beans, smoked ham, bacon, beef, and corned beef. They shot wild prairie chickens. They made their own soap draining the lye from barrels of ashes and mixing it with the fats which they saved. They made their own candles, they carded and spun wool and knit, and wove carpets and cloth.

For entertainment they had debates, spelling contests and sewings bees. The country schools and the homes were the social centers. And always there were excuses for the "Gathering of the Clan". Their houses and yards were large and the various families would bring food—good food—chicken pies, baked beans, pickles, jellies, jams, doughnuts, pies, cookies, brown bread and home made breads. The warm affection which existed between the uncles, aunts and cousins was sufficient to make a "Gathering" a great event.



A family and neighborhood gathering at the home of Azro Slye.

It would add to the richness of life if this custom of family gatherings could never become outdated. Many years later a name sake—greatgrandson of this George Dickson was living temporarily in California; when he returned to Wisconsin, he was asked how he liked California and the seven year old boy replied that he did not like it; when asked why he did not like it he replied "Because there were no relatives there."

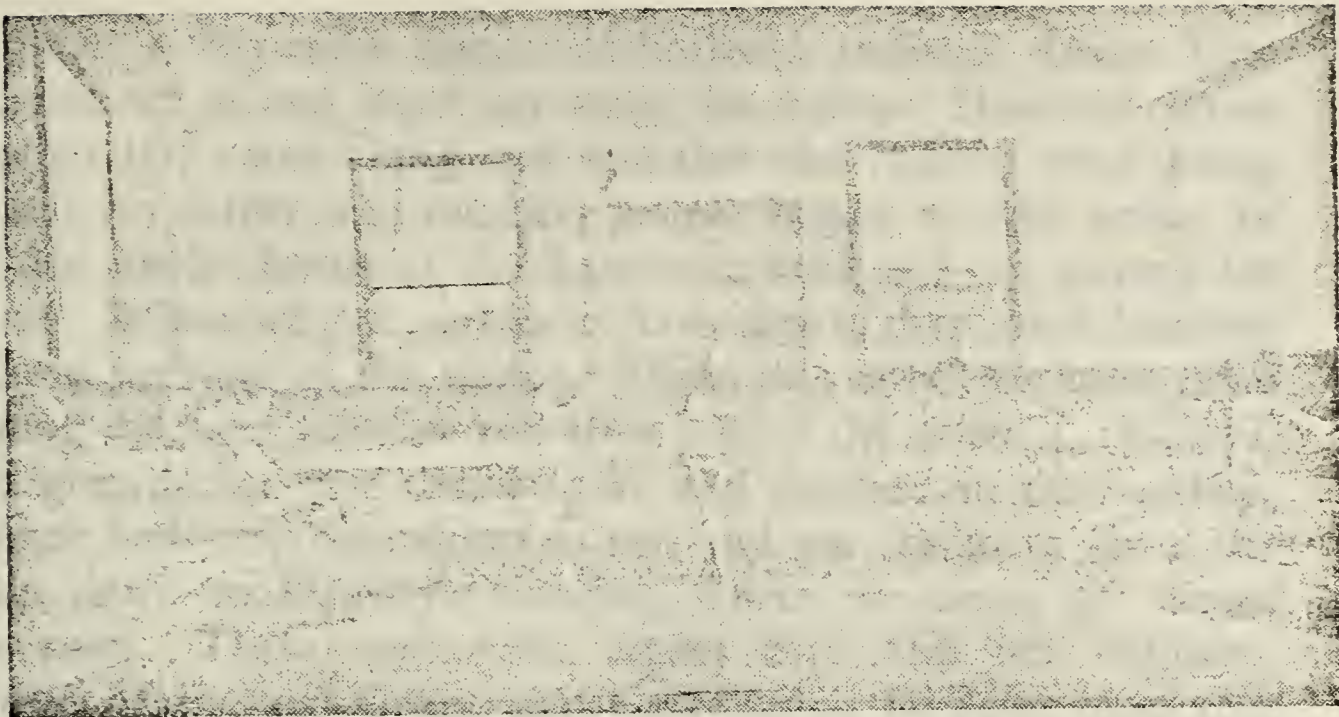
These Scotch families were devout church-going people and were leaders in the community helping to get a school organized, starting a Sunday School, helping to get roads built, and working for any movement which would aid the community.



A family and neighborhood gathering at the home of Uncle Thomas Dickson.

In 1856 the school at Waneka was established, the first school in Dunn County outside of Menomonie. This was a private school taught by Mary Harshman at the home of her father. The physical equipment of the school was limited to a few books, slates, slate pencils, simple furniture and little else. But a look at the roster of their teachers shows evidence of superior quality. The roster of teachers includes many of the names we have mentioned in this story. There was Charlotte Clough who had taught in the Washington, D.C., schools now at Waneka in 1861; Agnes Barland, 1863; Marian Frye, 1873; Margaret Harvey, 1875; Mary D. Slye, 1878 and 1883, Grace Slye, 1881; Mary M. Brown (later Mrs. A. J. Sutherland) 1876 and 1877 and others like Bertha Riek who made great contributions in the field of education and George Sutherland who taught in 1867.

One of the early members of the community called the school the Waneka school and later the settlement became



The Country School by Winslow Homer.

Courtesy of the City Art Museum, St. Louis, Mo.

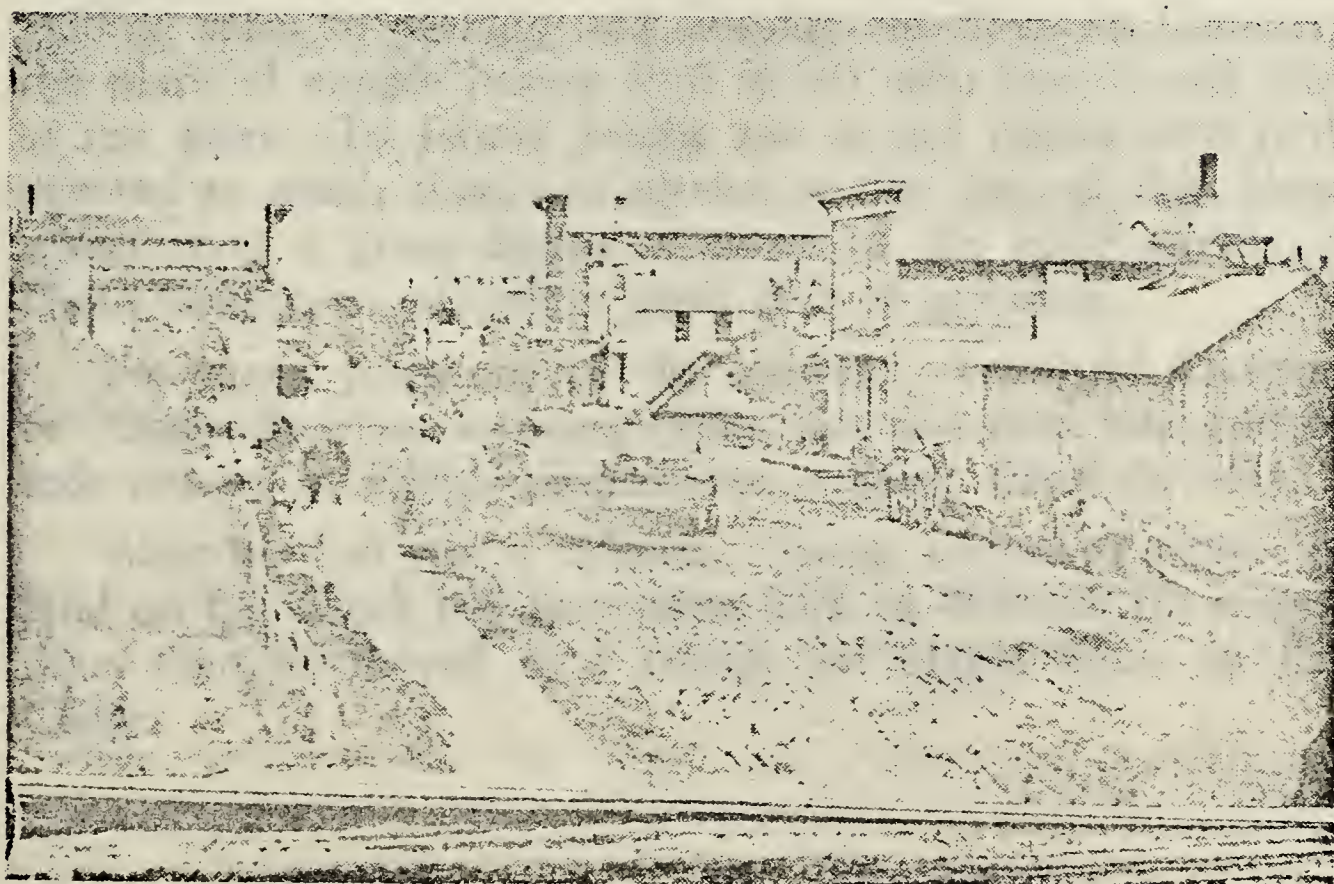
known as Waneka. Teaching was no easier then than now; in an old diary the teacher writes "even the most advanced pupils are very rough."

The Cloud Of An "Indian Scare"

On August 17, 1862, on a Sunday afternoon the Hutchinson, Minnesota, Massacre took place. The story of that massacre is that four of a group of Indian hunters were near the Acton Post Office when "One-who-kills-ghosts" spied a hen's nest in a corner of a fence. He wanted those eggs but was deterred by one of the other Indians. Their argument resulted in an orgy of killing which spread terror in Minnesota and neighboring states. In all there were over 400 killed, 2000 people evacuated in 153 wagons, 190 houses burned and many wounded. The Battle of New Ulm or the Massacre of New Ulm was a horrible experience in the history of Minnesota and news of this massacre brought fear to the neighboring states.

One Sunday afternoon, the last Sunday in August, 1862, Waneka had its Indian Scare. John Dickson in his diary tells of this dramatic incident. "Hod Jones, Billy Whitcher, and my brother Jimmie Dickson (who was killed in the Civil War) and some other boys were in the swamp at Mud Creek. I was in Sunday School where my Uncle Tom was Superin-

tendent. A boy came along and hollered 'Indians'. Uncle Tom laughed at it and went on with the lesson. However when another boy came along and said that the Indians were going to kill his father and mother, people began to take notice of it. My uncle dismissed the Sunday School and we started for home. When we got to Uncle Azro Slye's, they were bustling around packing up the wagon. There was only one horse team among the four families and they loaded the women, children, and grandfather into that wagon, and dumped in the bedding, feather beds and something to eat, and put me in to drive the team down to Rumsay's Landing where we could get across the river. There was Aunt Agnes Slye and her children, Willie, Matie, and Grace; and Grandfather Dickson from that house; then there was Aunt Mary and her children, Sarah, Agnes, Frank and Joe from that family; from Uncle Arch's family there were Aunt Janet, Martha and Maggie; and from father's family there were Henry, Jane, Nellie, Sarah and Mother. All of the men stayed back to fight the Indians and we started for Rumsay's Landing. There were many ox teams on the road,



Barstow Street, Eau Claire, 1861, Oxcart in foreground.
Courtesy of Eau Claire County Historical Society and Marjorie Barnes.

and when we reached the river there were so many ahead of us and the road was so narrow that we had to wait. As it began to get dark the news came that there were no Indians in sight so we drove back. When we arrived home we found that the yelling, which sounded like Indians, had been made by a crowd of boys hunting and playing, and probably hollering like the Indians, in the swamp. This was shortly after the New Ulm massacre in Minnesota and every one was in great fear because of that. Those who crossed the river at the ferry kept on going as far as Dunnville and stayed all night in the jail. After that the men formed a Company and drilled regularly."

One of the pioneer Waneka families was the Brackett family. Abraham Brackett of English Irish descent, one of a family of twenty children, came to Wisconsin from Quebec in 1862. His family has been prominent in the progress of Dunn County. His daughter Jennie Brackett Jacobs was for many years Superintendent of Schools of Dunn County and in addition to her other community activities she has been the guiding spirit in making and keeping the Waneka Cemetery the place of simple beauty it is to all who have loved ones at rest there. To Jennie Jacobs and to the others who have devoted so much time and service to the care of this place, which is to a great degree a record of the early settlers of Dunn County, we all owe a great debt of gratitude.

For many years one of the brothers, Archibald Dickson, or "Uncle Arch" as so many called him was road boss and he rode around in a high wheeled cart visiting along the way.

After his first year a Waneka, George moved to a piece of land on Elk Creek but later came back to Waneka for several years then he moved to a cottage on Maple Street in Eau Claire.

CHAPTER IX

THE WAR YEARS

"Here Lies a Patriot"

In 1862 when Geroge Dickson was leaving Connecticut, Abraham Lincoln was the President of the United States. The War between the North and the South had been in action for a year. The passions of hatred were evident in men's actions; straw effigies of the enemy were set on fire and thrown into empty areas to burn. Hard times prevailed.

One of George's sons was in the Service. George, the son, had enlisted at Newington with the 12th Connecticut volunteers, Nov. 18, 1861. He was a boy just 16. His brother James went to Wisconsin with the family and enlisted there. On Jan. 2, 1864 James Dickson enlisted in Co. K, 5th. Wisconsin Infantry. He was a boy of 19. Some months later the father, George, joined the army. This left the son Johnny a boy of 15 to care for the family, the mother and five brothers and sisters, and the farm. As John recounts it in his diary "When I was nearly sixteen my father joined the army and I was left in charge of the family as I was the oldest child at home. He left before the grain was taken care of; I had a man help me stack grain and then we thrashed it. After father left we moved from the log house into the frame house that we built. I came to Eau Claire and got a mason to help me plaster the house. We had a heater in the house, and it was freezing outside as fast as the mason put on the plaster it would come right off, so we had to move the stove out and open the doors and let it freeze. After we had it finished and put a fire in the house it would come off some places, and it was so damp that we finally had to move back to the log house.

We stayed in the log house until Spring and then moved into the new house again. This house had two bedrooms downstairs, a living room and a kitchen. The upstairs was not finished. We lived in that house for two or three years before it was finished.

With my father and two brothers in the war I too wanted to enlist. One night two of my boy friends and I went over to Mud Creek to a war meeting and signed up to go to the war, but before we could go we had to have our parent's consent because we were so young. I came home but mother would not give her consent.

That night along toward morning I heard someone talking downstairs, and some one said 'Johnny, get up and take the oxen and go down on the stage road and get father's things that he has left there.' And Father said 'I will take care of you, my boy, and your plans to go to war, you will stay at home.' He brought one of those army overcoats for me and I was glad to have him back. While my father was in the army he was paid seventy-five dollars a month because he could do carpenter work and that sort of work. Mail at that time was brought from Sparta, 100 miles by stage, and we had to go to Eau Claire, a distance of eleven miles, to get it, so we didn't get the mail often and we didn't expect my father to come home so soon."

THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

Three men from the family served as Volunteers in the Civil War, the father George and sons George and James. Both sons were casualties, James was killed at the Battle of Spottsylvania and George contracted tuberculosis from which he died.

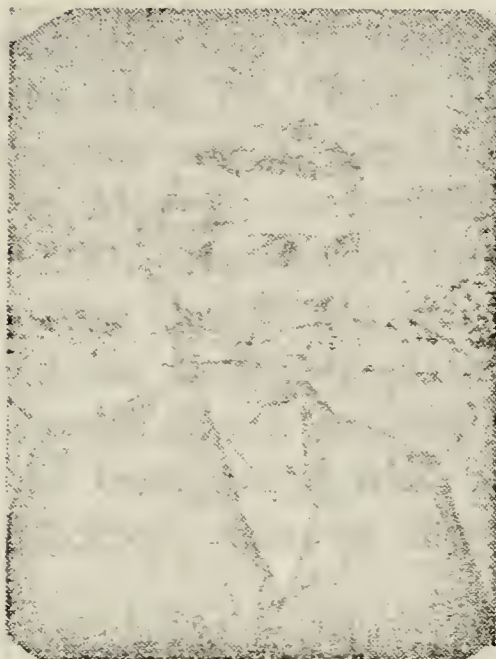
Listed in the "Annals of Newington" by Welles is this item.

George A. Dickson Co., 12th November 20, 1861

Re-enlisted as a Veteran January 1, 1864

Mustered out August 12, 1865

Later he enlisted again as he was in the service until 1870. George frequently visited his cousins the Clarkes at Tariffville and the sisters Libby Clarke Thurston and Jennie Clarke would recount later how he would cough during the night, and how sorry they were for him.



George Dickson

This house of the Clarke's was built in 1765; in the middle 1900's it was sold to a Hartford business man who restored it, painted it a Haddam red and labeled it with a sign 1765. This home is over the hills about two and a half miles from Hartford.

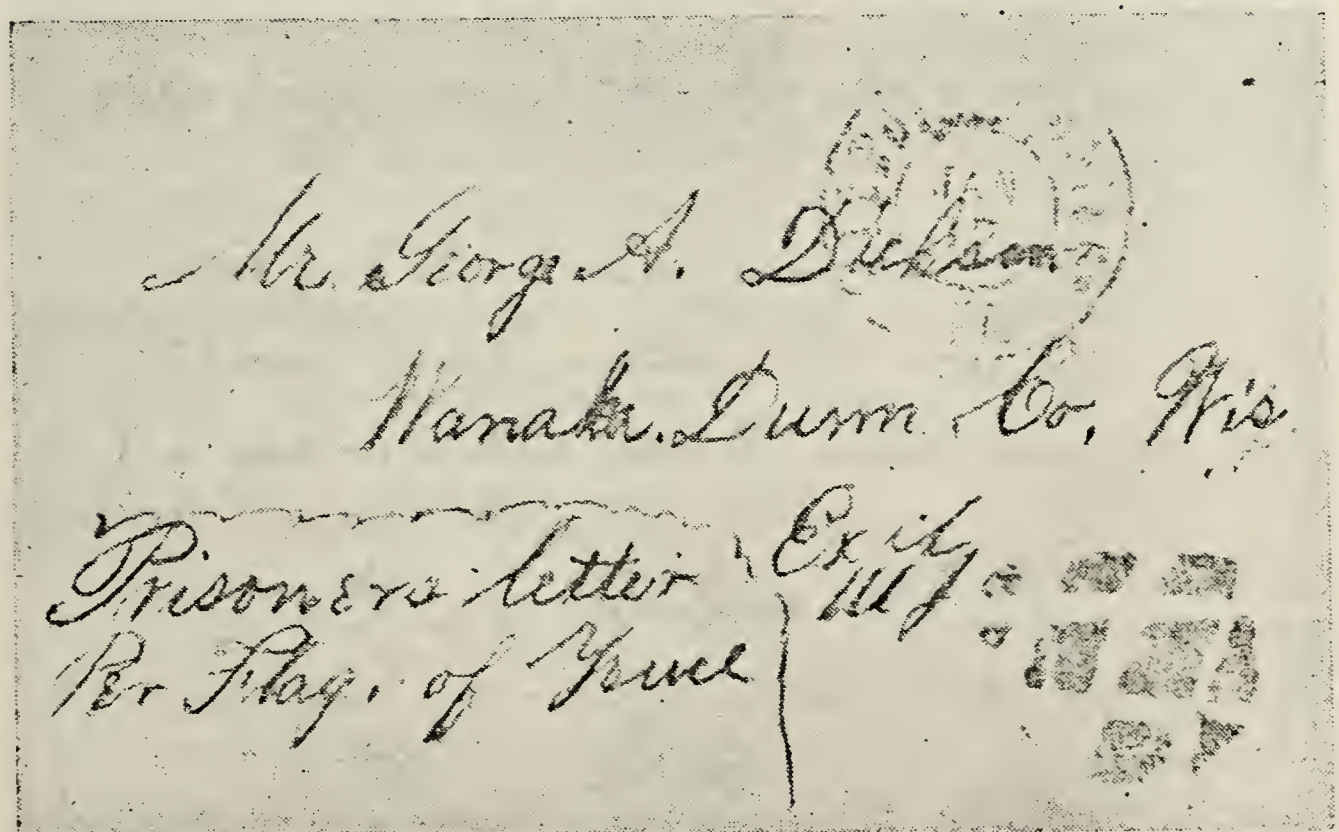
The saddle which was used by George or James in the war is in possession of George Dickson a great nephew of these soldiers. A painting of the soldier George in his saddle is also in the possession of this great nephew.



James Dickson

The soldier James, the boy of twenty, was killed at the Battle of Spottsylvania May 10, 1864. This battle was begun on May 8, 1864 and was one of the bloodiest periods of the war. From May 8 to May 10 the losses were 15,722 killed and wounded, and 2,001 missing in Grant's futile effort to dislodge Lee. It was here that Grant sent this famous dispatch "We have now ended the sixth day of heavy fighting—I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." At the National Cemetery at Gettysburg you can find the name of the soldier James Dickson, who is one of the vast throng buried there.

George was in service for about ten years during which time he had many experiences. He was good about writing to his family and a few of his letters have been saved. Writing did not come as easily to him as it did to his uncle Robert but he was just as loyal to his kin and it must be remembered that many of his letters were written from enemy prisons and conditions were not conducive to a free expression of his thoughts.



Savannah Ga July 18

Dear Sister

I now take the opportunity of writing
you a few lines to let you know that
I am well & hoping these few lines
will find you the same. We are now
in the State of Georgia in the City
of Savannah it is a fine place
I am glad that we will stay here
until our term is out the Reg
is here in the City and there
are a number of Regs in
the City we just heard last night

we got here last night
from Washington. We were
8 days in the water and we had
a pretty time as we were
by Cape Hatteras. We
must close up here
Yours
L. C. Connell
Savannah Ga

This letter was written from Savannah, Ga.

Savannah, Ga., July 5, 1862

Dear Sister:

Now I take this opportunity of writing a few lines to let you know that I am well, hoping these few lines will find you the same. We are in the State of Georgia in the city of Savannah. It is a fine place and I guess that we will stay here until our time is out; and the 9th Reg. is here in the city and there are two companies of Regulars in the city we just heard last night. We got here last night from Washington. We were days on the water and I've had a tough time coming.

Bugle call hurry so must close for present

G. A. Dickson
Co. C 18 Comm Batt
Savannah Ga

When George enlisted at Newington he was 16 years of age, now when he writes this letter he a boy of seventeen is fighting in a man's war.

In this next letter George, still a boy (now he is twenty years old) has been wounded in battle and is a prisoner at Libby Prison. Libby prison was an old soap factory and was said to be full of rats. The thin pea soup was said to be black with bugs. George was in this prison for nine months.

These letters written home by George are evidence of the affection which existed between the children and their parents and between the brothers and sisters.

The records of the Civil War prisons refer to them as "pens of horrors, nakedness, filth, sickness, starvation" with death reigning in the pens of horrors. "There was no shelter, very few had blankets the food was mush which had to be eaten out of the hands, cap or whatever one could find; the dead were uncoffined and piled into wagons like dead swine and some corpse lay for days without burial."

Gen Hospital No 21

Richmond Dec 19 1864

Dear Father & Mother
Take my Pleas to let you know
how I am & I am a long hoping
this will find you the same
Was taken out the 12 Dec. In
October I was wounded in the
ankle and it is just
well and I am doing well
So I must to lose my
letter in directing a letter to
me General Hospital
No 21 Richmond Va
leave it in Deady and put on
at a Prisoner's letter

Yours your Dear Son

George W. Dickson

Send it to Colonel

Mulford Fortiesmoun
the exchanging Officer

Old Point Comfort Post
January 17, 1864 Mark
Virginia

From:
Libby Prison
Richmond, Va.

Mr. George A. Dickson
Waneka Dunn County, Wisconsin
Prisoner's Letter Per Flag of Truce

General Hospital No. 21
Richmond Dec. 17, 1864

Dear Father and Mother:

I take my pen to let you know how I am getting along, hoping this will find you the same.

Was taken on the 19th day of October, wounded in the ankle and it is most well and I am doing well so must close my letter.

In directing a letter to me, General Hospital No. 21, Richmond, Virginia; leave it unsealed and put on it a "Prisoner's Letter."

From your dear son,
George A. Dickson

Send it to Colonel Mulfrey, Fortress Monroe, the exchange Army Officer.

Fort Monroe was a Military Post P. O. in S. E. Virginia.

Accompanying this letter was a copy of the Feb. 24 "Stars and Stripes." This paper was printed on the back of wall paper. One item in this paper had to do with George's Company. That is probably the reason why he sent this paper home. This item is as follows:

"MARCHING ORDERS"

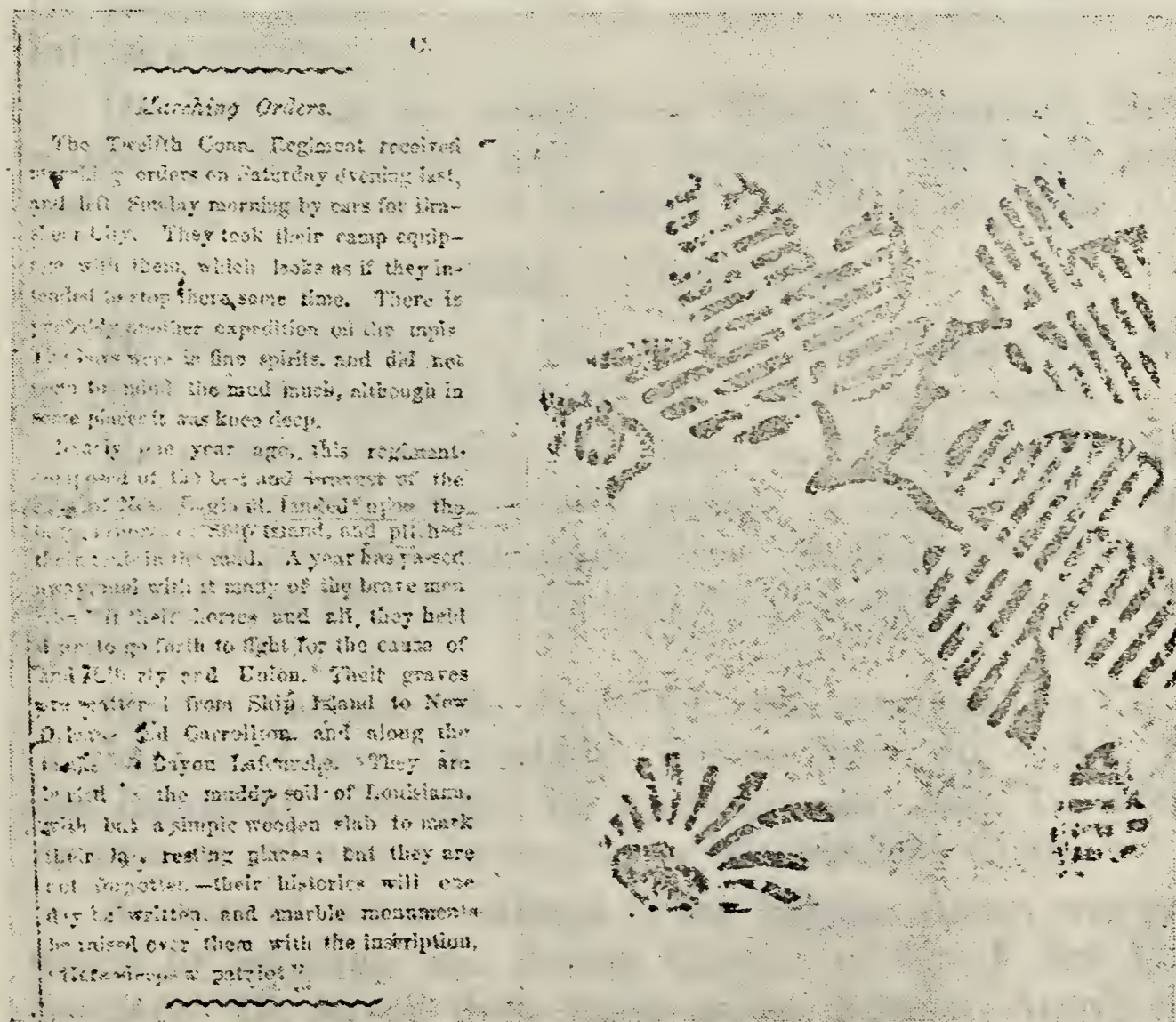
"The 12th Conn. Regiment received marching orders on Saturday evening last, and left Sunday morning by cars for Brashear City. They took their camp equipment with them, which looks as if they intended to stop for some time. There is probably another expedition on the tapis. The boys were in fine spirits and did not seem to mind the mud much, although in some places it was knee deep.

Nearly one year ago this regiment composed of the best and bravest of the sons of New England landed upon the barren shores of Ship Island, and pitched their tents in the sand.

A year has passed away, and with it many of the brave men who left their homes and all they held dear to go forth to fight for the cause of Liberty and Union. Their graves are scattered from Ship Island to New Orleans and Carrollton, and along the banks of Bayou La Fourche. They are buried in the muddy soil of Louisiana with but a simple wooden slab to mark their last resting places; but they are not forgotten,—their histories will one day be written, and marble monuments be raised over them with the inscription, "Here lies a patriot." "

George Dickson was sent to the Ford Theatre the night of April 15, 1865 to deliver a message to President Lincoln and was there when Lincoln was assassinated.

George's war experiences were many and varied during his ten years service; his brother was killed in action only four



These marching orders refer to the company in which George Dickson enlisted. Note that this paper, "The Stars and Stripes" Thibodaux, La., for Wed., Feb. 24, 1863 was printed on wall paper.

months after he enlisted. George was one of the volunteers to storm Port Hudson. While he was at Fort Independence, Boston Harbor, he was taking some prisoners to an assigned place and they were shipwrecked. He was wounded and in a hospital at Richmond, Va.; he was at Libby Prison; he was at Savannah Ga.; he was at Boston Harbor and during much of this time he was suffering from "consumption".

Records of the War service of George and James Dickson are on file in the office of "Graves Registration", Officer of the American Legion at Menomonie, Wisconsin.

JAMES T. DICKSON

He was born April 10, 1844 in Windsor, Hartford County, Conn. and was killed in action in Spottsylvania May 10, 1864. He enlisted January 2, 1864 in Company K, 5th Wisconsin Inf., as a private.

His body was not brought to Waneka Cemetery, but a marker has been placed there in his memory. He has a stone and a flag is placed in his standard each Memorial Day.

GEORGE T. DICKSON

He was born Sept. 9, 1845 at Saxonville, Mass., and died in 1869 or 1870 at Elk Mound (?). Cause not known.

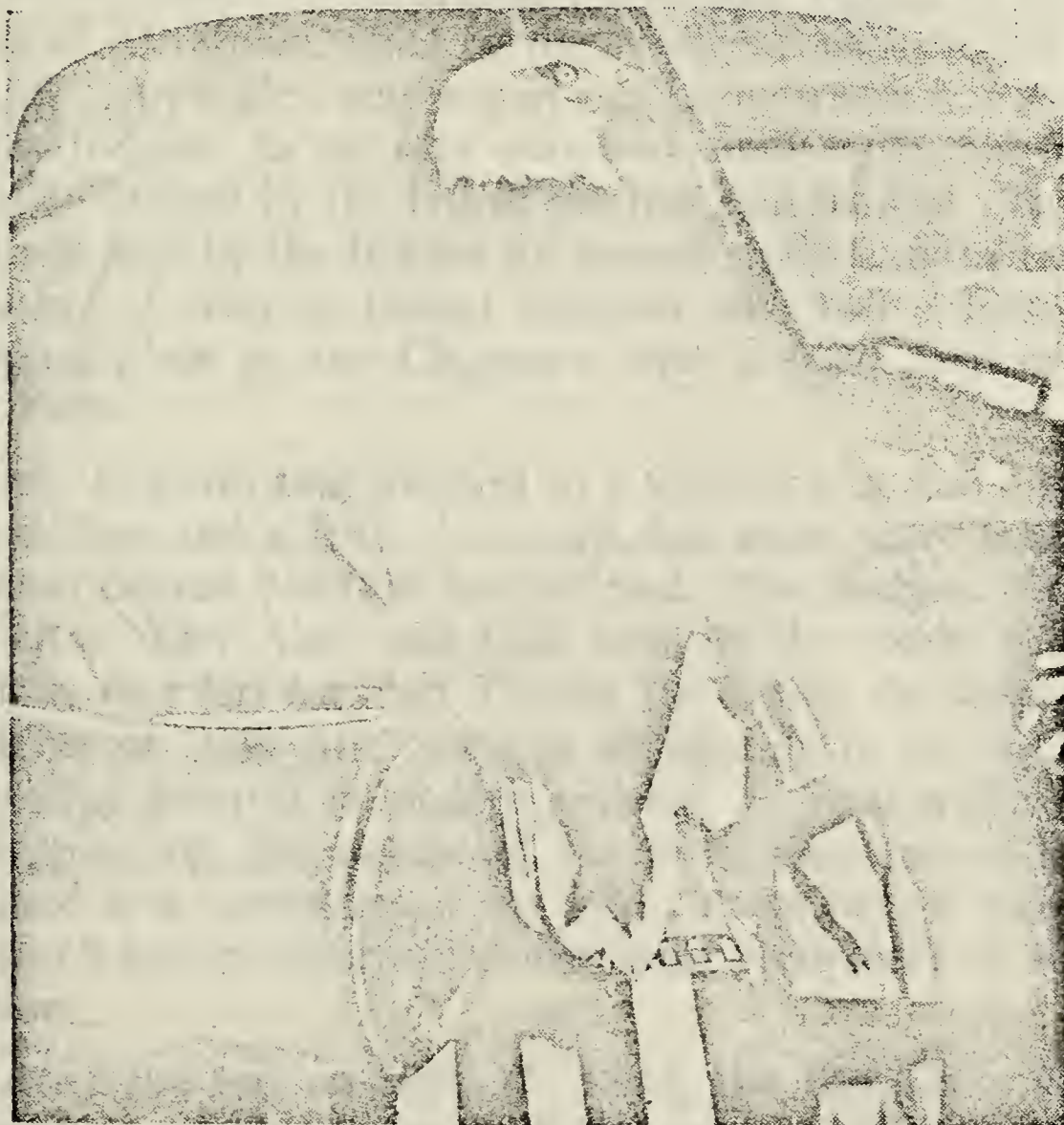
He enlisted November 18, 1861 at Wethersfield, Conn. and was mustered into Federal service in Co. C 12th Conn. Inf. He was promoted to Corporal Nov. 28, 1863; was wounded at Cedar Creek Oct. 19, 1864 and taken as a prisoner to Libby Prison.

He was paroled Feb. 25, 1864, and transferred to Co. C of the 12th Conn. (Battalion) Inf. on Nov. 26, 1864. He was honorably discharged, by mustering out, Aug. 12, 1865. At time of enlistment he resided at Wethersfield, Conn.

At close of war he enlisted in the Regular Army; was promoted to Sergeant, and Acting Captain of Co. F 3rd U. S. Artillery. He served three years in the Regular Army; and died soon after returning home (Elk Mound ?). During the war he was one who volunteered to storm Port Hudson.

This information, together with that of James Dickson, was given by the Adjutant of the State of Connecticut, and taken from books in the Memorial Library in Menomonie, Wisconsin.

George Dickson has a stone, standard, and a flag each Memorial Day, furnished by the Veterans Service Officer of Dunn County, Menomonie, Wisconsin, of the American Legion.



WAYSIDE GEMS.
394. Old Abe—the Wisconsin War Eagle.

Old Abe, the Wisconsin War Eagle which was an eye witness of 36 battles and which was frequently hit by bullets was still alive in 1874; he died in Oct. 1874.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

WISCONSIN'S OLD ABE

"Old Abe" is perhaps the best known bird in History and when a fire at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison in 1904 destroyed the old war eagle there was a feeling of loss throughout the nation.

One of the Companies in Wisconsin, Co. C., had for its mascot an eagle. Soon this Company was known as Eagle Company and then the entire Regiment was known as Eagle Regiment.

This famous bird was caught, before it was able to fly, by an Indian known as Zorth-O-ge-Ma-ke-zhik (Chief of the Day) a son of Ah Monse Chief of the Flambeau tribe in the Spring of 1861. An eagle's nest was in a tall pine which was cut down by the Indians. In the nest were two small eagles but one was so badly injured by the fall of the tree that he died. The other bird was kept by the Indians for several weeks and then sold for a bushel of corn to Daniel McCann who had a farm and a stopping place on the Chippewa river a short distance above Jim Falls.

Mr. McCann sold the bird to a Company in Eau Claire for two dollars and a half. It is said that some years later P. T. Barnum offered \$18,000 for the bird. The Badgers christened the eagle "Old Abe" and took him on the steam boat with them as they left for war. During the battles the screams and screeches of "Old Abe" were as stimulating to the soldiers as a cheering group is to modern athletes. So great was his value, in keeping up the morale of the men, that one soldier was assigned as a caretaker for the bird. Twice he got loose from his perch but he returned, to the great enjoyment of the boys in blue.

After the war on Sept. 17, 1864, the Eau Claire Co. presented him to the Governor of Wisconsin and he was kept in the basement of the Capitol where he was the center of attraction for visitors. He was taken out for parades and celebrations. In the latter part of the winter of 1881 smoke from a fire in the building affected him so badly that he later died from the effects. The body was mounted and kept in a glass case but another fire in 1914 destroyed this, and all that remains is the memory and the use of his name and picture for groups, parks, clubs or any thing which stands for courage and leadership.

And now it is Feb. 17, 1865 and father George is back from the war. James has died on the battlefield, George is still in service and Johnny is nearly seventeen years old.

George is stationed at Fort Independence in Boston Harbor. He is a *man* of 22 when he writes this letter to his sister.

Fort Independence, B.H.
Mass. Dec. 29, '67

Dear Sister Jane

Your kind and loving letter under date of Dec. 16th Inst came to hand and I was very happy to hear from you and to hear that you were all well as these few lines leave me at present. I wrote to Father the other day and told him what I could do and I am willing to do that and think that it is my duty to do it. I am very sorry to hear about Cousin Ira Clark's death. I wrote to Cousin Libe Clark the other day but did not know anything about Ira's death. I haven't got my appointment yet but expect it soon.

I have been acting for three months and over. Janie I wish that I was rich I would make you a good New Years present but never mind next year will soon come. You spoke about enjoying yourself. I am happy to hear about it and always will be.

We had a splendid Thanksgiving dinner. I went to Boston and bought 104 lbs: of Turkey. I paid \$26. I have all that I can do to take care of the company. I have to see that they get enough to eat and Clothing and am com. to take care of 86 soldiers. It isn't any easy job. I will have it easier, we are going to have 35 men discharged in January and that will make it easier for me.

You spoke about writing a long letter well I am sure I don't know what to write about. I think that I have tired your patience long enough by writing nonsense so it being late in the night I will close by sending my love to Father and Mother, Sisters and Brothers and Cousin Agnes and Aunt Agnes and to all the rest and keep a good share to your self which I know you will do. Goodnight I remain as ever your Dear Brother George

G. A. Dickson
Sergt. Batt F. 3rd Reg Artillery
Fort Independence B.H. Mass.
Dec. 16, 1867

(The dates at the beginning and at the close of the letter do not seem to be the same perhaps the script is difficult to read. Perhaps the date at the beginning is Dec. 2.)

The father George was a skilled artisan and his assignment in the army was in some such capacity. He was a carpenter part of the time. He received a pension and thus was in active service.

Office A. Q. M.

Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 17, 1865.

The Bearer *George Dixon* has
been in the employ of this Department, and being
honorably discharged, is entitled to Transportation at
Government rates to *La Cross, Wis.*
he paying his own fare.

Charles H. Irwin

Captain and A. Q. M.

It was at Fort Independence on Castle Island in Boston Harbor that the American statesman Charles Adams (1835-1915) spent five weeks in duty and of which he wrote as follows: "A pleasanter or more useful five weeks in the Educational way, I do not think I ever passed than those during which I played soldier at Fort Independence in April and May 1861.



Prisoners from the Front by Winslow Homer.

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Art Museum, New York

I enjoyed the experience thoroughly and what I learned, the details of drill and guard duty, proved afterward of the greatest value to me. I found my first tour of duty on the ramparts far from unpleasant. At the end of my first two hours it struck me that I had never known two hours pass more rapidly than did those my first two on guard. Later I saw the sun rise and at six I was relieved".

"On fumes eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread
And glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead."

CHAPTER X

IN THE WOODS

Seven years before the Dicksons came to Wisconsin, three loggers built three shanties on the south bank of the Eau Claire river near the place where the river joins the Chippewa; thus began the city of Eau Claire, later to become one of the wealthiest lumber cities in the world. The names of Knapp, Stout, Owen, Moon, Ingram, Carson, Shaw are some of those recorded in Wisconsin life and history as representing this era.

Associated with this era is a vocabulary unique to the industry and to those times. By-products of lumber were *saw dust* which was carried away for filling; wood in the form of *slab wood* and *shingle blocks* was delivered in dumpcarts. Logs were sent down the river on *rafts* sized according to the number of "*cribs*" and operated by men called *river pilots*. These river pilots used *peaveys*, *cant hooks*, *pikepoles*, and for recreation the river pilots engaged in a sport called *birling* or log rolling. Men who went to the woods were called *lumber jacks*.

John Dickson is now a young man of 17 in the year 1866; Eau Claire is a busy lumber town, and in the area north are the lumber camps, offering employment to many. John is now "Johnny" and the story of "Johnny" in the woods is told by himself when he is an old man. "When I was about eighteen I went into the woods with the loggers. We left the 13th of December, I can remember the date. There was a flurry of snow. We went with oxen and there was so little snow that the runners would go through on to the bare ground, and we could go only a few miles a day. The first night we stopped at Truax prairie with a farmer and the next night we went to Chippewa Falls and the next night to Chippewa City. We stopped at a boarding house there to eat and found that they had the Small-pox and we could not stay there. Then we went to another house and got our supper and slept on the hay in the barn. The next morning we went to the house to get our breakfast; during the meal a child was crying and we found

that she had small-pox and we had eaten two meals there. I had my first taste of whiskey then, to ward off the Small-pox.'

Then we went on to Jim Falls and stayed there all night, and the next night we went to Cornell. There was nothing there at that time except a stopping place which was kept by an old Frenchman. He told us we could not get across the river so we drove up to Little Falls where the ice was good and we crossed there.

We had a great deal of difficulty in finding the camp and when we finally got there we found that there were three men there who had gone up early in the Fall to build a stable for the oxen and a camp for the men to occupy. They had the camp but no place for the oxen so we had to build a place for them. When we got there we found that one of the men was sick and the other two had just finished building a sled to haul him down the river.

We left home the 13th of December and we got there December 24th, the day before Christmas. Twelve days were needed for travelling a distance of about 30 miles. The next morning the boss wanted us to go out and help build the



Logging Camp in Wisconsin 1880's.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

stables but there were three Norwegians in the crowd who could not go out because it was Christmas. They sang songs and played cards all day and the poor cattle had to stand outdoors for there was no stable for them. All the rest of us went out to work and worked all day.

The camp fare was beans and biscuits and dried apples. There was no sugar nor butter nor oleomargarine. We sweetened the dried apples with "black strap" molasses. We had salt pork, and once or twice we had fresh pork and fresh beef. We did not have any coffee, but we had tea strong enough to bear up an egg.

The camp was built with logs. It was one big room and the bunks were on each side of the building right down on the ground. The beds were made of boughs, balsam and hemlock. No straw nor hay but the blankets were put right on top of the boughs and we slept on them. We were not allowed to touch one bit of hay—it was too precious. The company furnished the blankets. Right beside the bunks there was the "deacon's bench" in front of the fireplace, which was in the center of the building. The cooking was all done at one end of the camp in a Dutch oven, as there was no stove.

We did not see one person all winter except the men who were working in the camp and did not see a newspaper nor a magazine all winter, also there was no drinking by any man while in camp.

One fellow in the camp had a watch and one morning we did not get up and the boss got so excited that this man became angry and told him to get a timepiece of his own, and the boss said he would get us up if he had to stay up all night to do it, and the next morning he got us up about two o'clock in the morning. I thought there was going to be a regular battle; the boss was very angry and swore like a trooper. We always got up before daylight. We had our load all ready the night before and got to the landing before daylight the next morning. I was one of the teamsters and always drove a team in the woods except the first winter, when I was a swamper, that is, I cut the road to the trees in order to get to the logs.



Hauling Logs with the oxen in the 1880's.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

We broke camp about the last of March. The first time I went into the woods we left the sixteenth of March because the boss wanted to leave for fear one of the scalers would come along and find out how much he had stolen. There was always a fear that the general scaler would come and discover any thefts that had been made. These rivers used to be piled full of logs in the Spring and during the high water the fellows who drove on the river would break the roadways and start the logs down the river.

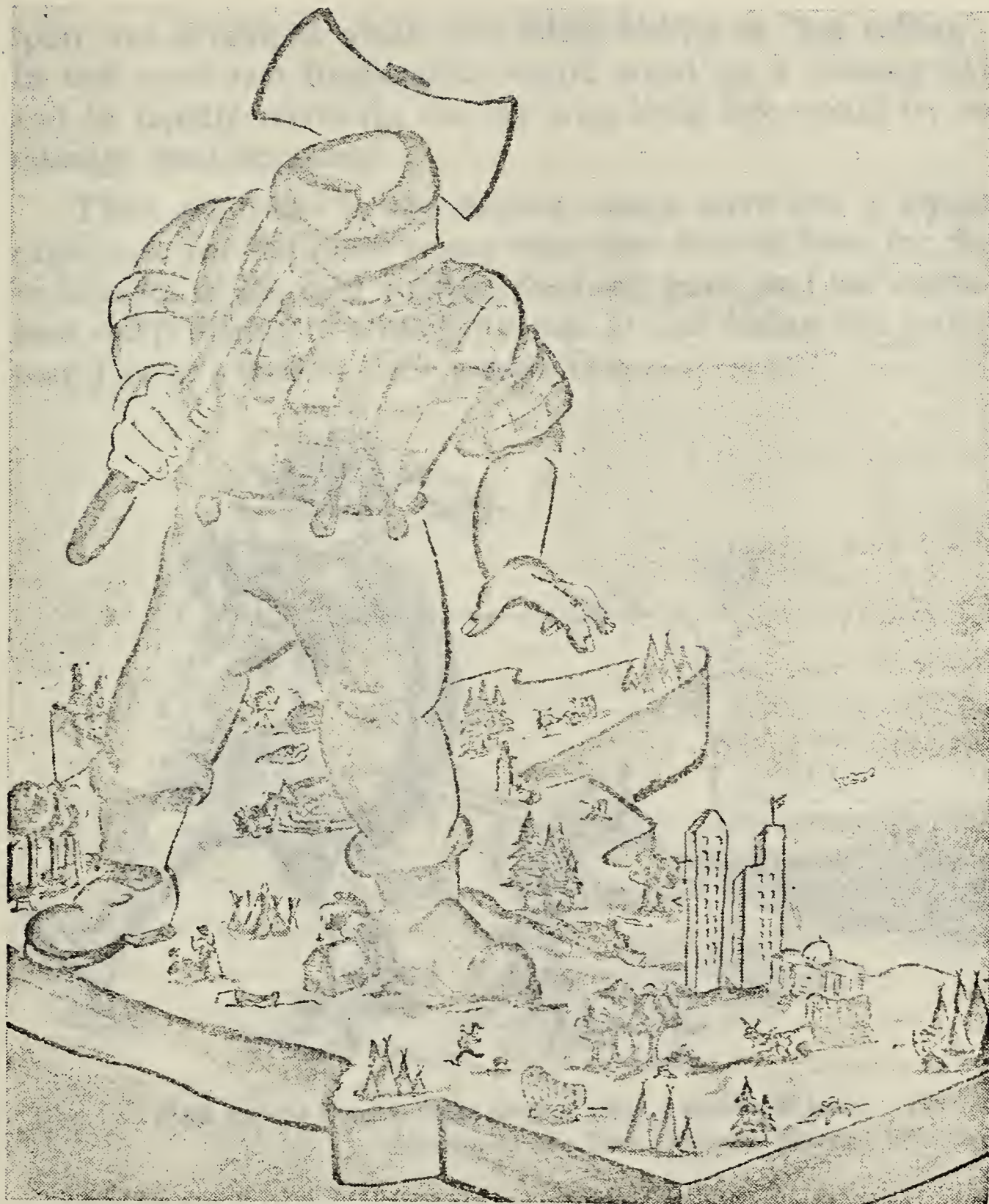
The fellows would come out of the woods in the Spring and idle around town for a week or two and spend every dollar they had made during the winter. Then they would go back on the drive where they all got wages and they would drive the logs down and then they would have another spree and spend all their money in a few days or a week. Then after that many of them would go out into the harvest fields and work until about time to go into the woods again, and so they continued year after year, spending their money every time they were laid off. We were paid about thirty-five or forty dollars a month and board, but when I drove the teams I got seventy dollars a month.

The first winter I started driving with my own team one of my horses was taken sick and died, and as I had paid two hundred dollars for the horse, I made nothing that winter. All the horses were sick that winter with the epizootic.

After I had stayed four months in the camp I worked in the saw mill until harvest time then I went home and helped harvest. After the harvest was over I went back into the woods again. I went to the woods nearly every winter until I was married when I was twenty eight."

The Frenchman mentioned in John's account of his trip to the woods was Jean Brunet, a Frenchman of the educated class who was a member of the territorial legislature in 1837. He contributed much toward the development of the Chippewa Valley; he built a saw mill at Chippewa Falls and for years operated a stopping place, for woods and river men, near the present site of Cornell.

The greatest woodsman of them all was the mythical Paul Bunyan, about whom many tall tales were told in which he grew in weight and stature with each tale. There was a real Paul Bunyan in Canada who was said to be so strong that he could carry 500 pounds over a ten mile portage. U. S. lumberjacks heard about him and adopted him as their hero. It was said that the mythical Paul and his Swedish foreman fought all over the Dakotas on top of a mountain and that when they were through there was nothing left of the mountain but a few darkened lumps of earth which are now the Black Hills. They rolled around so much that they knocked down all of the trees in the Dakotas and left nothing but prairie land. Paul had a bookkeeper who used 7 barrels of ink to dot the i's on the paychecks in Paul's camp. Paul had a blue ox called Babe which was so large that it took forty days for sparrows to fly between it's horns. Paul Bunyan is said to have strode all over the West, building Pike's Peak, painting the Grand Canyon, and pulling out stumps to form the Yosemite Valley. After the logging industry waned, Paul and his Blue Ox, Babe, became popular legendary figures to use as names for parks, historical museums and summer camps.



The greatest logger of them all, Paul Bunyan.

Courtesy of Dayton's, Minneapolis, Minn.

The logging days left lasting marks on the history of Northern Wisconsin. Vast fortunes were made. Some of the men associated with the lumber industry married American Indian women or "squaws" as they were called and the children of these unions were called "half-breeds". A popular

sport was developed which was called birling or "log rolling". In this sport two lumberjacks would stand on a floating log and by rapidly revolving the log with their feet would try to dislodge their opponent.

These ten years in the lumber camps were not a joyous experience for the quiet young man who had no bent for the vicissitudes of the cold winters, the hard work, and the coarseness and profanity of a lumber camp. It was during this period that Johnny's mother, Jane passed away.



Paul and his blue ox Babe hauling away a section of land.

Courtesy of the State Historical Society, Wisconsin

THE AMY YEARS

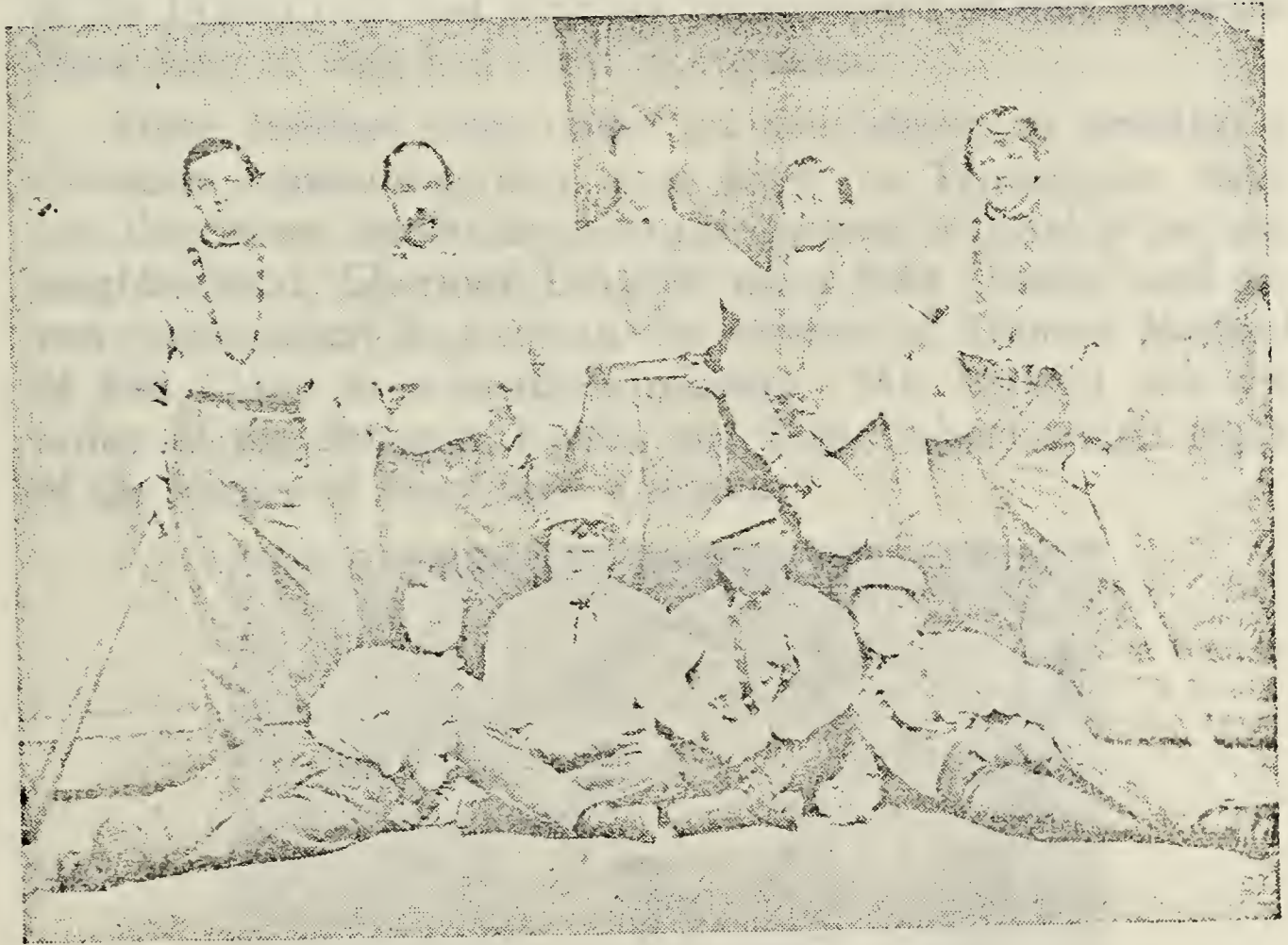
The Amy years represent a period of about fourteen or fifteen years while George was at war and after he returned from the Army, while his wife Jane was still living and the first few years after his second marriage.

There is a sense of bleakness about these years. Jane Turnbull Dickson's life was not as easy as the lives of her sisters-in-law. They were all living in large white houses near each other at Waneka; all of Jane's brothers and sisters lived back in Connecticut. In her thirty-nine years of married life she had borne eleven children and buried six. She was about fifty-four years of age when she died and in these last years at Amy she bore a son and lost him when he was two years old. She lost two sons as casualties of the War, and buried another son and daughter who were in their early twenties. Five children she lost during this time. She lived ten miles from a doctor by horse and buggy. She did all of the home work with no modern conveniences. Even the water for cleaning had to be hauled in barrels from the creek.

Jane left little behind to tell what were her interests and what were her impressions on the lives of those around her. She was a quiet gentle lady and she instilled in her children a deep respect and a tender affection for their mother. She withstood the hardships of a pioneer woman whose husband was off to war. She cared for her daughter who was a deaf mute. She struggled against the cold Wisconsin winters watching her children fight a losing battle with "Consumption". She deserves to be remembered. Mingled with the pleasant and comfortable use of all the modern labor saving devices should be a sympathetic appreciation for the pioneer mother who did so well with what she had.

His second year in Wisconsin George Dickson settled on a farm near what was to become the settlement called Amy. John tells us that "the next year we built our own house. We built the shanty with only two rooms. Father had to make most of

the furniture, the tables and the benches. We had a wood stove in the main room and a kitchen stove in the other room. All the settlers had Dutch ovens. Father made the beds and we all slept in one room with a curtain up for privacy, and we all ate in the kitchen. We also boarded the teacher for two weeks at a time, and she slept in one of the curtained off partitions."



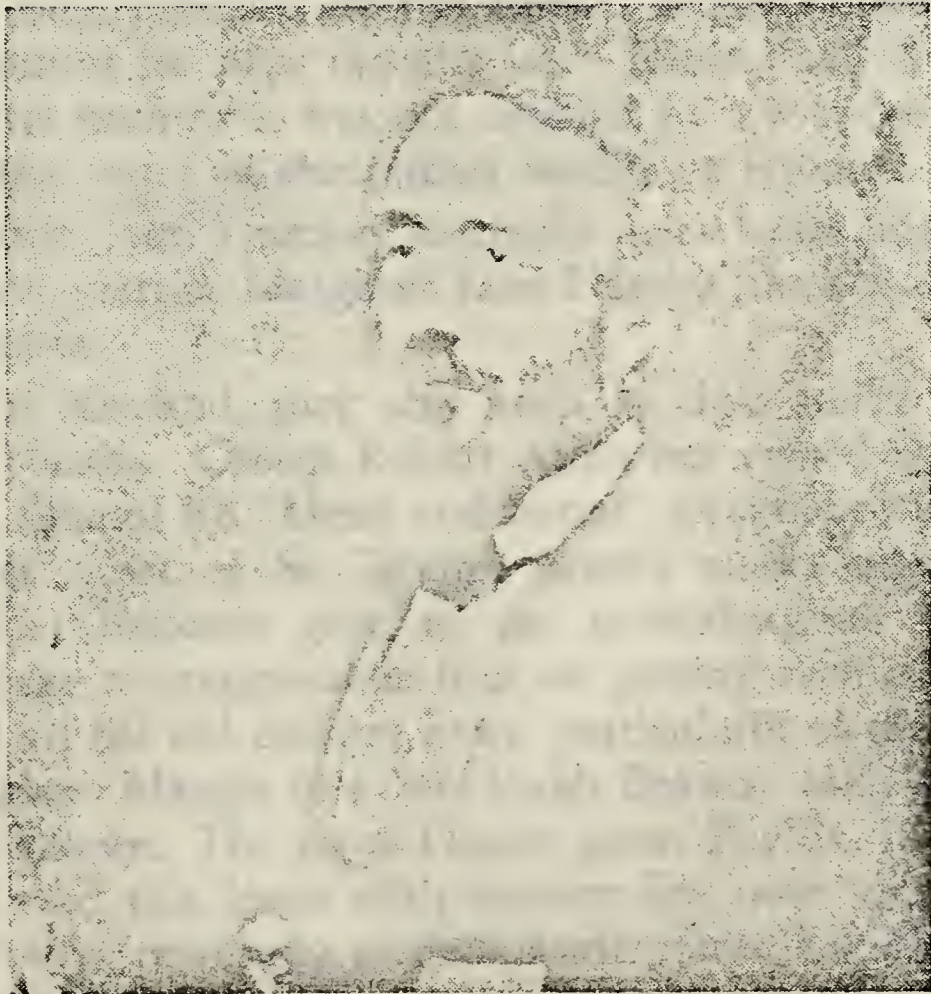
Baseball nine of 1868. Life was not all work.

And now that the war is over, George is back on his farm with his children. This is the year 1865; there are six children at home. John, Henry, Sarah, Nellie, Herbert and Janie. A son was born in 1866 but he died in 1868. The son George who was in the service in the East remained in the Army until he had to give up and come home and die from the "consumption" from which he had been suffering during the years he was in service.

Some of the other pioneers in this community were the Langdells, the Remingtons and the Browns, the Robert Lees and the Fullers. Henry Langdell was from New England; he married Charlotte Clough the sister of Eliza Clough Savage

who was the mother of Ella Savage Dickson. Mr. Remington was married to Mary Jane Dickson, the daughter of Archibald Dickson. A daughter of the Fullers, married Henry Dickson one of George's sons. Henry Brown moved to Amy in April, 1865. He was a Presbyterian from Belfast, Ireland. His wife Amanda was of English stock. These families had their roots in the British Isles and were not far separated in time from the home land so they had much in common.

These families were united in their desire to establish a Christian community; they were active in Temperance work and they were leaders in securing spiritual leadership for the neighborhood. Charlotte Langdell was a born "leader" and she was instrumental in securing the services of Thomas Barland of Eau Claire as a spiritual minister. Mr. Barland was the father of the Barlands, Keiths, and Towns about whom much of the history of Eau Claire is woven.



The Rev. Thomas Barland born in Scotland in 1809.
Educated in Glasgow.

Courtesy of Isabel Towne

Charlotte Langdell writes to Mr. Barland "There was a Baptist preacher here who had moved back to his farm but was preaching once in two weeks, however there was no definite time for services. Mr. Swartz preached once in two weeks on Friday evenings during a part of the winter but they don't know whether he intends to come again or not. There is much need of faithful preaching but compensation is very doubtful. The Methodist preacher never could get a great deal and the Baptist preacher still less. We are so discouraged, we don't know which way to turn.

We had a visitor from a Covenanters missionary who had been preaching in the winter at the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Barland when the roads get better won't you try to come out here to meet with us."

Mr. Barland did come to preach to them and to other groups. Like other itinerant preachers of that day his lodging and meals were provided by the homes. When he was a guest of the Dicksons he slept upstairs with Johnny and if he came in the winter months it was not unusual for the room to be so cold that the water in the pitcher would be frozen.

Meantime Jane Dickson succumbs to a heart ailment and George later marries Margaret Jane Harvey, the school ma'am from Vermont.

Back in Scotland, they still keep in close touch with the American cousins. Cousin Robert Allan has visited at Waneka and Amy. One of his "bread and butter" gifts after visiting the cousins was a set of Sir Walter Scott's works which, later, Grandmother Dickson gave to the granddaughter Lyla. He writes George to congratulate him on getting such a nice wife and to tell all the old country news, particularly of the wedding of his daughter Maggie to a Mr. Hugh Brown. He also tells of his trip to France. The three Flagler girls, Phyllis, Jeanne, and Sally will read this letter with interest for, over seventy years later, they were travelling to these same places, London, Dover, Paris and Cannes.

In the account of the wedding one notes the generous gifts; with only forty-two present at the wedding, the number and



Cousin Robert Allan of Greenock, Scotland.

value of the presents is rather amazing. Cousin Robert mentions several Waneka people in his letter. The daughter of the Uncle Arch Dickson at Waneka who was married in 1876 was Margaret Ann Dickson who married F. C. Baggs, Feb. 2, 1876. The Mary who is thinking of matrimony is Mary Slye who married the Rev. Wm. Gray. The Grace is Grace Slye who married Wm. Gray's brother, John Gray.

Finnart Terrace, Greenock
15 Nov. 1876

My Dear Cousin

I have just this morning received Dear Mary's letter with your own. P.S. I really ought to be ashamed of my self and desire not only a good scold but a sound whipping for being so neglectful and the next time I show face in Waneka Lodge I expect you will not have anything to say to me, now you see how deeply and sensible I am of my neglect and I am sure you will all forgive me—when I got your letter of 2 March about the time I should have answered it, I was summoned by telegraph to the far south of France. My niece Ipsie Allan was supposed to be dying and she and her sister Belle among entire strangers and more than 2600 miles from here. I went direct to London, then to Dover and Paris where I remained two days expecting letters. I then had a railway journey of 1800 miles through a foreign country and all but ignorant of the language, in 28 hours I arrived at Cannes on the shores of the Mediterranean. Their hotel was four miles in the country but Belle was waiting with a carriage for me. I found Ipsie very ill and thought she might be dead before morning but she seemed to think that now that I had come she would be all right. She rallied considerably during the next fortnight and the doctor advised me to risk the journey home with her. I did so but was obliged to break the journey several times between Cannes and Paris. She could not put her feet below her and had to be carried out and in of every conveyance. I had to do all this for her as she thought nothing could be right done unless I did it. Poor girl she was very weak. I got a nice nurse to come home with us and after resting four days in Paris and one in London I got her to her aunt's house ten miles from Manchester. When I left her, no worse, she thought than when we left France. I got home next night after being away over four weeks but had to go back within a week to bury her beside her mother and brother, and so poor Belle out of a family of twelve (including Father and Mother) is left alone under my charge until she is twenty-one, she is now 16½ years. All this fairly put writing out of my head, and next came the preparations for Maggie's marriage which is a more serious and expensive affair

than in Waneka, it has cost me \$1600. Maggie got as many presents as would almost stock a jeweler's shop. I will try and mention some of them—viz—

- 2 doz. silver fruit knives and forks
- 2 doz. silver fish knives and forks
- An elegant time piece with three large Bronze figures
for mantle piece
- 1 doz. silver tablespoons
- 1 doz. silver dessert spoons
- 1 doz. silver teaspoons and tongs
- 1 case fruit spoons and nut crackers
- 2 silver cruet stands and bottles
- 1 large Sofa sewed blanket
- 1 silver service, tea pot, sugar, and creamer
- 11 silver Corner dishes
- A fine work table and a hundred other things too numerous
to mention.

As to the wedding, forty-two were present nearly all relatives of Mr. Brown and myself, and after cutting up the bride cake which was three stories high and beautifully ornamented, sat down to a sumptuous dinner with five men waiters to serve. The whole affair lasted from two o'clock until ten o'clock. The young pair went off at four o'clock for Edinburgh, York, Harrowgate, London and Paris and returned in three weeks and commenced housekeeping in earnest. We see Maggie almost every day. Her house is almost 200 yards from No. 3 F.T.

I see what you say of George's marriage. I have re-read all of your letters today, tell him from me he is a plucky old fellow that he has got such a nice wife, I will have a nice lot of new acquaintances when I again come to visit in Wisconsin. Mary tells me that Uncle Thomas was down at Philadelphia but was not well I hope he is now well. I rather think he did not take Mrs. Dickson with him, tell him if he had done so he would have been all right. My kind love to Mrs. Thomas she is a very nice body, And Arch has also been parting with a daughter, it seems to be the way of the world both here and in Wisconsin. Mary says her school will continue "if nothing happens". What does she mean? Is she thinking also of leaving her father's house? Isn't it a great shame that these girls won't content themselves where they are but must be running off with strangers, that is what I said to Maggie the other day, but they will have their own way,—but how is my dear bonnie lassie Gracie I often think of her cheery laugh. I think you have reason to be proud of both of them. I should like much to see you all again but I fear it will not be on this earth, but I trust we shall know each other in the happy land on high, how is Mr. Slye and Willie, kind

regards to them for all their kindnesses to me. Mary told me in her first letter she could sing and play "There mae luck about the hoose". I hope she will never forget her mother tongue. I suppose Aunt Whitcher and all her family are well. Kind regards to them all, also to Uncle Arch and his wife and daughters. How are the bears getting on without me. I saw by your letter that some of your young folks got a fright with one when going home with Agnes Whitcher. I have many a time regretted that I did not bring home with me the skin of the large one I saw in Eau Claire. It would have made a fine hearth mat. Mary says you are not very well. I hope next letter will bring good news of you. I saw Mrs. Arnot and Mary Dickson last week. Aunt Janet is very frail, she does not know any body but still otherwise in good health. Mary, Alick, Maggie Brown and myself send kind greetings to you all. I enclose Christmas cards although it is rather soon.

Yours truly, and very affectionately


Robert Allan

THE BELOVED STEPMOTHER

In 1875 George Dickson married the School ma'am from Ryegate, Vermont, who had come with a group of Scots to settle on Lake Pepin. She was a woman of great intelligence, extremely high moral standards and possessed with a personality which won the respect and affection of all in the home and the community. She had known the Dicksons when they were living in Vermont.

Her teaching career in Wisconsin was of short duration as it was terminated by marriage.

On October 27, 1877, John Dickson now 29 years old was married to Ella Savage. Ella had lived and received her education in New Hampshire. Her mother's sister, Charlotte Clough who had taught school in Washington, D. C., and who had married a fellow teacher was now living on a farm in Dunn County, six miles south of Elk Mound. In 1874 Ella came West to visit her aunt. That was the year the River Falls Normal School was established. In 1875 the school began its first instruction and three girls from the Dunn County area attended. These girls drove back and forth to River Falls together and they became lifelong friends. They were Mary Brown who became Mrs. A. J. Sutherland, Anna Allen who married J. W.



Common Schools of Wisconsin
For Dunn County

TEACHER'S THIRD GRADE CERTIFICATE.

It is Hereby Certified, That Mrs. M. J. Harvey has passed a satisfactory examination upon all points required by law for a Third Grade Certificate, and ~~she~~ is licensed to teach a public school ~~for one year~~ from the date hereof, unless this Certificate be sooner annulled.

The following is ~~her~~ standing in the several branches, upon a scale of 10:

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Orthoepy.....9 1/2 | Theory and Art of Teaching.....8 | Grammar.....9 1/2 | Geography.....7 |
| Orthography.....9 | Penmanship.....8 | United States History.....8 | Constitution.....7 |
| | Mental Arithmetic.....7 | Reading.....8 | |
| | Written Arithmetic.....7 | | |

Margaret Harvey 1877
O.S. 51

Geo. Shaper
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Margaret Harvey's certificate to teach in Dunn County, Wisconsin.

Whelan, and Ella Savage who married John Dickson. After attending River Falls Ella taught school at Elk Mound.

The school ma'am met the eligible bachelor at the Langdell home and at the meeting house (the school house served as a meeting house as well as a class room.)

The Waneka relatives accepted the young lady and, when Ella is back in Lancaster visiting her family before she marries, Aunt Agnes Slye writes to her as follows:

Waneka, April 23, 1877

Dear Friend

I must drop a few lines to you or you will think I do not intend to answer your kind letter.

I think your picture very good I look at it every time I go into the parlor.

Just commenced to write this when August and John came and I had to get them a lunch, Gustof and Fred are here also. I asked Gustof what to say for him, he said "tell you he was a good boy."

Oh! Ella it is a beautiful day lots of folks out riding. I went to Sunday School and was very tired when I got back, it is so far to walk. I have been very busy cleaning house have white-washed and papered my room, white-washed the other bed rooms, have the sitting room to

clean then I will be through for this time at least; we have so many men now it keeps ma and me very busy with the work. I will be so glad when we get through breaking and are alone.

Wish I could be with you eating sugar (maple), have not seen any this spring.

You wished to know all the news in the dressmaking line. I do not know of anything to write about; it is too busy a time to think of making dresses. The last time I saw Mrs. Webster (the week after you went home) she wished me to sew for her but how can I leave home and so much to do it is almost impossible to get a hired girl. I thought of Martha and I hiring a girl together but I think I had better stay at home this summer. I might want to live in town if I went there to sew. It came very near spoiling me before.

Grace has been disappointed in her school, they hired another teacher. I suppose you hear all the news elsewhere so you may get the same news two or three times. Agnes Whitcher has been quite sick for several weeks, is better now. William is up today I suppose he has answered your letter before this. Martha's school is not out until the fourth of May, she is going to teach at Forest Center this summer. Maggie is going to teach also, so her teaching is not ended yet, she does not like farming she is going to board at home or keep house and Frank (Frank Baggs and Margaret Dickson Baggs) works at his trade. How do you like the looks of Mr. ———, heard you found him homely is he such? Beauty is only skin deep.

Now Ella I must draw my letter to a close as I must write to Martha tonight. Yes Ella dear they have been having meetings at Elk Creek and I can rejoice with you and imagine how happy you will be in that little cottage; may your peace and joy never be broken is my prayer; now Goodbye Ella dear for the present.

Love to all and yourself as well,

Agnes Dickson Slye

The Savage family back in New Hampshire were not quite sure that they wanted their Ella to go to Wisconsin and marry this farmer, Georgia Savage, the younger sister was particularly worried for fear that the young man was not good enough for her sister. She need not have worried for John promised Ella that as a test of his love for her he would read the Bible from cover to cover.

Eventually the father and mother Savage and daughter Georgia came to Wisconsin to live. Ella's brother Albert, who was a lawyer in Auburn, Maine, and who later became the

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maine remained in the East, but every year made a trip West to visit his family.



This was the home to which John Dickson took his bride. It was then on the road going north from the Amy School. Later it was moved to the Remington farm.

In John's diary he writes of his marriage as follows. "After we were married I went on to the farm. I bought the farm before I was married and built the house, into which we moved on our wedding day. Before I was married we had to haul the lumber and building material from Cedar Falls and the lime we hauled from the lime kilns at Knapp. Speaking of Knapp, the old preacher Knapp would walk twenty-five miles in the summer to preach. He would come into the church with his rifle on his shoulder and carrying his shoes in order to save them. He would get a little donation occasionally, that was all. He was not paid a salary but lived on the donations of his parishioners. He walked seven miles to meeting but did not go every Sunday. He had no team when I was first married. I married the school teacher at Elk Mound which was about four miles from my farm. She boarded at the farm next to mine, which was originally part of my father's farm. We lived here for about fourteen years with the exception of a year or two when I worked for my brother-in-law, George Anderson, who had a harness shop at Menominee."

The land which John Dickson had for his farm was purchased from his father for \$300, the sale for which is recorded in a land contract which we have on file.

The social life of these years consisted of family gatherings, spelling bees, religious meetings, and meetings of the Temperance groups. Occasionally there would be Baptisms at the pond at Eliza Wilson's Mill. On Sunday afternoon it was a rather terrifying sight, to the children, to see these people walk into the water waist deep and then be immersed under the water by the officiating preacher.

This mill at Elk Creek was a leading industry of that time. After Mr. Wilson's death his daughter Eliza took over the business. She was a prototype of the modern business woman, and this area has been known since that time as "Eliza Wilson's Mill". The old Road to Menomonie passed by here then, on to Waneka and Menomonie. When the community wanted to put on a real celebration such as on the 4th of July, a man with a trained bear would be the attraction of the day, and in later years there might be some fire works at night.



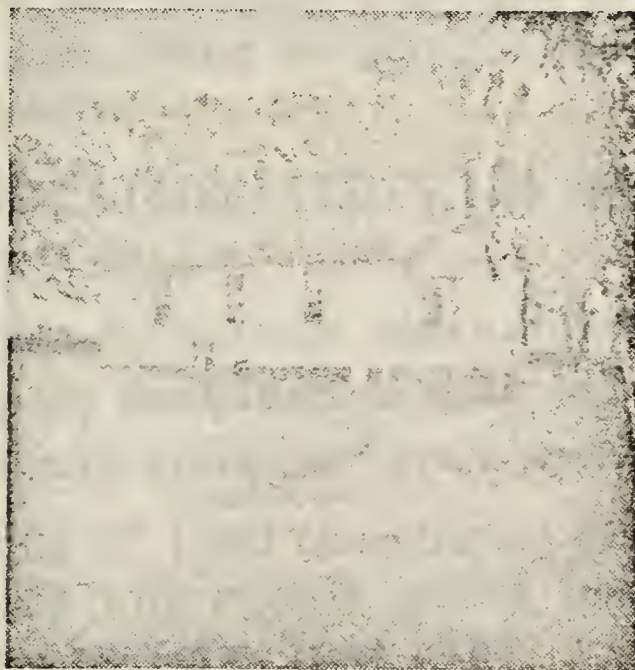
A Country Store. John Dickson opened a country store at the Amy Corner opposite the Amy Schoolhouse.

*Courtesy of Henry Ford Museum,
Dearborn, Mich.*

Before John moved to Eau Claire he had established a country store at Amy on the Menomonie road. He also established a Post Office here. His wife Ella named the town Amy in honor of Mrs. Amy Kellog Morse a great Temperance Leader.

Ella was appointed by the Government to be postmistress. The mail was brought from Elk Mound and for a time John carried it that distance free of charge.

Across the road from the store was the one room school house and on another corner the very large white farm home of the Remingtons. Grandmother Savage had a small white house about a mile from the store.



One room rural school, 1880's.



Pupils of Amy School. Lyla Dickson at extreme right. Charles Dickson fourth from the left. The teacher was Nellie Blank.

One of the Dickson cousins from Scotland emigrated to Australia and established a home there. His name was Peter Dickson and his address in Australia was No. 22 Tinyford St., Williamstown Victoria.

During these Amy years John's farm adjoined that of his father George and the two families were of mutual help and companionship to each other. George who had been about twenty when he left Scotland was eager to return for a visit. With his son John living so near the father could leave his farm for this journey.

GRANDFATHER VISITS HIS HOMELAND

"O Scotia! my dear my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent!

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil

Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!

In the Spring of 1880 Grandfather Dickson makes a trip to Scotland. His wife eagerly looked forward to the letters which she hoped to receive from him.

Grandfather was no letter writer but he did his best to keep his wife informed as to the progress of his trip. She however liked nothing better than to take her pen in hand.

The "guid" man left in May and his Port of Embarkation was New York. Evidently the passengers on certain sections of the boat were required to take their own bedding.

New York, May 27, 1880

Dear Margaret Jane:

This line finds me in New York, we sail today. I went out and got my money, and have bought my bedding.

We are going to have about forty in our part of the vessel. I cannot tell you anything about the vessel.

You must excuse me for not writing you a long letter. I will try and do better next time.

Yours forever

G. A. Dickson

Soon after her husband left, Margaret wrote him as follows:

May 21, 1880 My dear Husband. Your seat is vacant tonight, but I can chat awhile with you by aid of pencil. I presume you are whirling a way towards Beloit now. Hope you will find some good man for company, so not to be lonely. I have regretted my forgetfulness so much. You went away without eggs or dried beef. I hope you get a mug so you can get a little tea. Mary and Maggie got here about noon; stopped to dinner. I have been resting some. Milked the cow without trouble. Johnnie was home about five o'clock. I wish you could have a good bed tonight and rest. I hope I shall soon be better. May you be watched over and preserved from all harm by the Blessed Master.

May 22. Now George come and sit here beside me (I have your chair) and we'll have a friendly chat. I have been able to work some today. I had a good night's rest, although I was called up in the night. Some one knocked. I asked "What is wanted?" and heard some thing about a horse. I thought it was Johnnie so got out of bed then spoke again, some one at the door said he wished to get to Elk Mound. I told him to go on to the next house as there was no horse here. I saw him go out the gate and run on up the road. The moon was shining, I was not afraid.

You see this is my birthday, no specialty of it.

I expect you are visiting with the cousins tonight. I wish I were there too.

Henry had the team today preparing the ground for seed. Jane is in the stable. The cow is very gentle.

I think I am gaining some. Annie has gone home to go to lodge, but will come back tonight. I use the camphorated medicine.

May 23. This is Queen Victoria's birthday. Wonder what she'll get for a present.

We had rain yesterday and some turkeys but the hen is not off yet. Annie has gone to town today with her folks. John has gone for lumber. It has showered all day today, I am very lame, worse than any time since the first day. A letter from William Saturday that came to the Mound last Tuesday, two days before we were there.

Henry said he would come tomorrow and build a fence. I expect a letter from Chicago tomorrow. I see the White boys have moved but no word about going with you. I hope you are well and enjoying everything. If I have to sit here I can write many letters, but I hope to be able to do more than write. I have been writing to Ren. Another shower coming. I sent in for some camphorated medicine and Ayer's pills. I think that linament helps the pain and soreness.

May 25. My dear. If you are on your way to New York today, you'll have a warm ride.

I am much better than I was yesterday, perhaps the warm weather, and the medicine too. I bathed my limb last night and this morning and took one pill. It is extremely warm. Henry has gone to Eau Claire with the horse and buggy to get groceries and John is plowing or preparing the potato ground and dragging the corn.

I expect there is a letter for me at the Post Office from Chicago but no one has gone to the Mound. I do wish to hear from you. If I were only well I would be your own brave wife but this sore painful limb makes me like a baby. But I shall try the wash and the pills perhaps there may be virtue in the treatment, but above all I wish to remember the Great Physician, for no cure can be effected without His blessing on the means used.

Annie came back this morning. She is sewing today and helping to care for the turkeys. The hen in the box has 11, the other one we saw today but have not been able to count, only one unhatched egg in her nest. Tonight I'll put her in the coop and keep her there until the yard is made.

I expect Henry will be here tomorrow. They have Addie Curtis there. So Hattie has some one to help her when she needs, as I can not invite her home while I am so lame.

Annie tells me that John and Sarah will be out next Monday—to move—they had a gay time at the circus yesterday, another circus June 2, that will be the day of our Missionary Meeting at Mrs. Langdell's. Mrs. Lawson of Eau Claire has my papers, she asked for all the papers read. Maggie read for me. Another page written nearly. I wonder how they will read to you. I take comfort sitting down with you every day.

Sat., May 29, 1880

Come my dear you are wanted here. What are you doing? Writing for me? It is a cloudy afternoon and cool. This is the day the S.S. celebrates the Centennial of founding S. Schools by Robert Raikes. Wonder if they miss me! Well I expect the N. Y. letter tonight. Johnny would go from the grove to the P.O. Perhaps I forgot to tell you the picnic is at Brackett's Grove instead of the Mound. Annie is away to the picnic. She will come and stay with us tonight if she cannot get Mrs. Griffith. I tried hard to go until John and Sarah got here but could not. So I'll have to have some one till Nellie comes home. I gave up yesterday. I found I would never get better, but I went as long as I could. Today I have walked only what was absolutely necessary. My hip I think is better and it is below my knee more, so may work off.

Mon. May 31, 1880. Well my dear George they are all away. Johnnie with a load of oats, and Annie with the horse and buggy to Eau Claire to move out John and Sarah. I am better this morning,

think I am gaining now, so your own wife will be around again and not a baby. I hope I am truly thankful to Him who bowed to me His ear and is restoring me to health and strength again.

Your New York letter came Saturday. Now you are on your fourth day out. I hope you are having a nice ride on old ocean and well and hearty. I think I shall be happy and contented if I am well, but my dear you do not know how much I miss you. Thomas and Maggie came down yesterday to see how I was getting on and would take Mother and me home if I could get no one to help me till Nellie gets home.

The Assessor has just been here. Organ \$75, Buggy \$50. The horse and cow he will tell Mr. Savage when he gets them all. He says the taxes will be high, the highest the law allows—five mills on the dollar. The road taxes are enormous—they say, but do not know what yours are yet. The dog is not assessed this year, so Curly will go tax free.

Tuesday, June 1. My own dear one. This beautiful day, the sun shining and only a little wind. I hope it is as beautiful to you. How long the time will seem to both of us before we can hear from each other. J. and S. came last night. Their things in the granary. Annie has gone home. John has not heard from Menomonie, intends to go out this week. Can have ten dollars per week in Eau Claire, so may work there until Bryant is ready for him. I could not get the turkeys in last week. Johnny will take them tomorrow. I hope you are getting on so nicely and will find a kindly welcome, not what is called a "Scotch welcome", but go about as Grant did around the world without "one cup of comfort" as in "auld Lang-syne". May God in His mercy watch over and guide you till you are back safely to your own dear home where you are so much missed.

Wed., June 2 Dear one—another beautiful day. If you had as pleasant days your voyage must have been just lovely. I hope everything with you has been lovely. Why could not we have a telephone so we could speak to each other. It may be well we cannot as I could not give you time to visit our dear Scotch cousins. A letter from Nellie today "I do not wish father to go to Scotland alone." Well John and Sarah are here. It is nice for me Sarah is very kind to me in my affliction. You need not be uneasy. She is well and Johnny will probably stay until Nellie comes.

Missionary meeting at Mrs. Langdell's, only Maggie from Waneka. I hope I may be able to get out soon. Mother has gone to Missionary meeting.

Thurs. June 3. My dear, dear husband will you sight land today? Surely Friday or Saturday you will see your native land if Kind Provi-

dence has favored your voyage. How I would like to step on Scotia's soil with you. Won't your heart give a great bound when you find yourself on Scotch soil?



George Dickson, Mary Helen (Nellie) Dickson, Margaret Jane Harvey Dickson.

Maggie said Mrs. Slye is better. The friends are well. Albert Savage is expected this week. Nellie says "Will William White come to my home this summer?"

Now my dear one visit as soon as you can. This will not reach you until you have been a week there. I wish some of the friends to take you to a Covenanter meeting. I think there is a congregation in Glasgow. I wish you to enjoy this visit much. How wonderful it seems to me to think you will see your own native land after so many years.

May God in His good Providence give you much to enjoy and health to enjoy much. I never sleep till I ask God to take care of you, and me too. May we both be spared to see many pleasant days in each other's society, if God wills. We are in His care; and may we so live that when we leave the shores of time we may join the redeemed throng over there and so be with the Lord.

From your own loving wife, with more love than you can think.

M. J. Dickson

The daughter Nellie who is mentioned frequently was a deaf mute, a young lady about 17 or 18 years of age, a student at a school for the deaf at Delevan.

Margaret Jane grows impatient as she waits for news from her husband, George, and another letter from her to him is dated June 14.

Elk Mound, Dunn Co., Wisc.
Monday, June 14, 1880

My dear Husband,

John has been to the Mound but no letter from you. Well if you are only well, I am contented but I would like so much to hear from you, my dear one. It takes a great amount of hope and trust to wait patiently for the wind and tide to bring me news of the absent one.

It has been raining since morning. I hear that many families from the "Bottoms" are camped near H. W. Reed's in tents, not a family on the "Bottoms". Many had to come away in boats. The water was rising all day Saturday, caused by the breaking of dams—the flood dams—on the tributaries of the Chippewa. The Dells boom gave way on Saturday. What will become of so many families if this rain continues? Mrs. Frye's folks came to Robert Lee's Saturday night.

It is a providence to us that John is here. He does the chores. They churned 6 lbs. 11 oz. of butter today, not a week until tomorrow.

Tues. 15 More and more. The Chippewa bridge is gone started Sabbath Day. (The new drug store)—the stone building part of the

stables (new). Mistake. They say more than a hundred buildings have passed Eau Claire. Oh what trouble! I think we would be very ungrateful to complain. We are sheltered and in no danger from the water. The flood dams breaking is what caused the rise. If the Dells dam stands this they may feel sure of its strength.

Wed. 16 My dear, dear boy. Do you know I have had no letter yet? Thomas and Maggie called down to see me yesterday. T. told me I was looking too soon. I have heard from the P.O. every day this week so far. John, Johnny, and Henry were at Eau Claire today. Mr. and Mrs. Doughty called yesterday. I think she saw the bridge start. The water was so high that it floated the bridge and the logs pressing against it started it off. I hear Lake City is flooded. What a fearful time. Nellie had a letter from Celinda Rinder. She is writing to her.

Thurs. 17 Dear precious one. Have not heard from the P.O. yet. Christopherson girl who takes lessons at Ella's Thursday has agreed to bring the mail but she had not come at 3:30. They will bring it over if she comes. It is warm and pleasant. We have had no rain since Monday. I hope you hear from us often. My dear one it has seemed long to wait. I can only hope you are safe and well. I know God can keep you without my aid. Perhaps I looked too soon for a letter, but I have had to wait.

Saturday, June 19 My dear precious Husband. This is a beautiful day. I had intended to finish this today to send away Monday, but I do not know now what to do, no word from you. I hope you are well. Do you not think the organ of hope will get pretty well developed? It has been exercised for some time. May the Good Shepherd watch over and protect you and bring you back safe and well. I do hope your journey will be a great benefit to your health and that you will come home hale and hearty in both soul and body.

Tuesday, June 22 My dear one. This must go to you without any tidings from you; we would like to hear from you but do not. May He who numbers the very hairs of our head watch over and guide and guard you at all times. Oh that you might be a child of grace and an heir of glory. Lovingly,

Your Affectionate wife,

M. J. Dickson

About the same day that Margaret Jane mailed her letter to her husband she received one from him. This letter left Glasgow June 9, arrived in New York June 20 and at Elk Mound June 23.

Glasgow, June 8, 1880

My dear Margaret Jane:

The Nevada arrived at Glasgow this morning after a passage of about 12 days. We were all glad to get on shore. We had a rough passage but we must thank God for bringing us safe to shore. I don't feel very well. I have a bad cold, but I hope to get better soon.

I am stopping at Whytes Commercial Hotel, a Temperance house established May 1837.

I went and found my cousin, Mrs. Arnot. I think I will go out and stay two or three days with her. You must not be angry with me for this short letter, for I feel very poorly, I hope to do better next time.

When you write, send in care of John Biggar, Pollock Shields, Glasgow. Tell Nellie to be a good girl and I will bring her something.

Good night and may God keep you all.

From your loving husband,
G. A. Dickson

Among the gifts which George brought back were silver forks. These dinner forks which are now in the possession of the grandchildren, are a much larger dinner fork than the Americans use. They are indicative of the "rugged" Scotch.

Another letter is written from Paisley, where so many of the cousins lived.

Paisley, June 15, 1880

My dear Margaret Jane:

I write to tell you that I am well and I hope that this will find you all the same. I went to Mr. Biggar's last Wednesday, they were very kind to me and glad to see me. Mr. Biggar and I went to a cattle, horse, sheep and poultry show last Friday. There were some very fine horses some weighing over 20.00 hundred lbs.

I wrote to Mr. Allan. He came up to Glasgow last Saturday. He and his family are well. I will go to Greenock next week. I came to Paisley last Saturday. I am staying at Mr. Lyle's. They are very kind to me. He is working at Coats Thread Works.

Monday I went out to Johnstone. Today I met a man; after I left the cars he stopped me and said "Is your name not Dickson, George Dickson?" I said it was and he said "I knew you well you and I slept together in Rothway don't you mind when we hid our silver in our stockings?" He happened to be an old playmate of mine, he went all over the town with me. There is a great change in the place.

Dear Wife you must excuse me for not giving an account of all I saw or heard but when I get home and by your side I will tell you all. I am taking note of all that I see and I will get you to write it. If I could only write like you I would write you long letters, but you know how it is.

I have just received a letter from you and was glad to hear from you and am sorry to hear that you do not get better of your lame hip, but I am in hopes the next letter will bring better news, so that you can go out and take a ride.

What are the names of the twins? Is Nellie at home?

Tuesday I am going to Wishaw with Grace Lyle to see her daughter.

My Margaret Jane I will try and do better next time. I will write to you next week.

Love to all and may God bless you all

From your loving husband

G. A. Dickson

I will send a paper with this.

Another letter soon follows.

Greenock, June 23, 1880

My dear Wife:

I received yours of June the 2, I was very sorry to hear that you were so poorly. I did not sleep much last night.

I came from Paisley to Greenock yesterday. I have been stopping at Paisley most of the time at Cousin Lyle's. They are very kind to me. I will stay at Greenock for a few days. I got your letter when I came to Greenock. I will be home as soon as I can, if you want me to start for home just write by the return mail, for I cannot take much pleasure now.

Last week I went to Wishaw and Bouthaval Bridge and on Saturday I went to Stirling Castle and Wallace Monument; it is a beautiful place and I went to where the Battle of Bannock burn was fought. Yesterday I went to Loch Lomond, today I am going to see Burns Monument. When I come home I will tell you all I saw.

I hope this will find you better. I cannot write any more.

From your Loving Husband

G. A. Dickson

The letters are coming to Margaret more frequently now.

Paisley, June 29, 1880

My dear Wife:

I received yours of the 14th of June and was glad to hear that you were a little better. I wish you felt as well as I do. I stayed at Mr. Allan's from Tuesday till Saturday. One day I went round the kiles

of Buit and round Kirrn Brodick, Lamash holy ille and Whiting Bay and back by Rothesay Wams Bay and Dunoon back to Greenock. One day to the land of Burns by Largs Ardrossan to Ayr, in the splendid steamer Bonnie Doon.

One day I went to Dunoon to see my cousin Mrs. Parker. I came back to Paisley last Saturday; I have a good place to stay with Cousin Lyle.

When you write send mail to the care of George Lyle, Coats Mill, Paisley. I think I will start for home about the end of July. I think I will go to London Thursday to be gone about a week. I want to pay a short visit to Edinburgh when I come back from London. I sent you a paper that you will take pleasure in reading.

O how I do miss you. I am going to take dinner at Mr. Spence's tomorrow. They are an uncle and aunt of Jane's.

My love to you all,

From your loving husband,

G. A. Dickson

Another letter from Margaret Jane.

Elk Mound, Dunn County, Wis.

July 3, 1880

Dear Husband:

I do not get writing done every day to my dear one because if you start for home in July it will not be many more letters that would reach you. I'll send this one in a few days.

The Doctor called on me last night. He thought I had improved a little. He will not come again if his medicine helps me. I have to send for medicine to town. I was quite smart yesterday but today feel rather poorly. Because I did not sleep well. I hope that you sleep, and that you will come home a hale, hearty man. I cannot gain as I would like to, my precious one I hope I'll be quite well when you get home.

Henry has the team today to take his wife and babies to picnic at Elk Lake. They named the girl Martha Jane (Mattie) for Mrs. Fuller and they named the boy Harvey Lyman for Mr. Crane not for me.

The Children are all well. Nellie is washing the dinner dishes. John is away with Johnnie on the prairie, breaking on Mr. Savage's place, opposite R. R. Lee's.

Mr. ——— is slowly wearing away, had a warrant served on him the other day—I hear,—for breach of the Seventh Commandment—His partner in crime. It is awful. May God forgive them. How gracious it is we have a forgiving father through Christ our Advocate, but it is baseness in us to go on sinning because God is merciful. He is also just and will by no means pardon the guilty. God is very kind

to me much better than I deserve and believe He will bring my dear one home to me in peace and safety and that together we may serve Him the rest of our days. I think, dear husband, that God has a controversy with me because I have not lived as I have vowed and I hope when you get home we may unitedly praise, thank, and bless His Name.

Mon., 5 July My dear one. I am better this morning. Arch and Agnes B. were here yesterday, Azro, Matie, Grace and Agnes and Willie. All in usual health. Thomas poorly yet, Mrs. Slye better.

The weather is pleasant but not so warm as it has been.

May you be cared for by our Kind Father above. We expect some of the Scotch friends will come home with you. We all unite in much love to you and the kind friends.

Our hearts will be lifted up to the Preserver of our lives for His blessing.

Till we meet again, Affectionately,

Your loving wife,

M. J. Dickson

The next letter is from George from London.

London, July 8, 1880

My Dear Wife:

I am in this great city but the streets are very narrow and crooked and go in every way. It is very hard to keep from getting lost. I have seen a good many places of interest. One day I went through the Tower of London, it is a great sight, I cannot begin to tell you what I did see there but I will tell you when I get by your side. Next I went up to the top of the monument that was put up for the great fire in London, about 200 feet high. I got a fine sight of the city.

Next I went to St. Paul's Cathedral. O! that is a splendid sight. Next I took the train for the Crystal Palace; it would take about a week to go through it.

I have been to see the House of Parliament and Clock tower. I went through Westminster Abbey. I saw the famous Cleopatra's Needle. It stands along the side of the Thames; it is solid stone, its height is nearly 68½ feet; its width 7½ feet; on each of the four sides there are three columns of hieroglyphics.

I went to hear Spurgeon yesterday. I saw the lord Mayor of London with four horses all covered with gold.

I will start for home about the end of this month. I hope you are better than you were the last time you wrote to me. What will I bring home to you?

From your loving Husband,

G. A. Dickson

And then this last letter from George.

Paisley, July 19, 1880

My dear Wife:

I got back to Paisley on Saturday the 10th from London. I wrote to you when in London, I told you some of what I had seen, the rest I will tell you when I get by your side. I was in Glasgow two days last week and saw Peter McFarland my cousin.

I went to the State Line and found out that the Nevada will sail from Glasgow for New York on the 30th of July. I have about made up my mind to go home on it or on one of the other Allan Lines.

I am going in to Glasgow tomorrow. I will write to you, the end of this week and let you know. I hope you are better by this time; you need not write any more to Scotland as I will have left before it would reach me. I am going to Greenock and Edinburgh this week.

From your loving Husband,

G. A. Dickson

I have made up my mind to come home on the Bolivar of Anchor Line; it will sail the 29th of July.

While there he writes of hearing Spurgeon the great preacher. Charles Haddon Spurgeon called the boy preacher accepted a congregation at 18. He went from smaller to larger churches until in 1861 he went to a great Metropolitan Tabernacle which could accommodate 6,000 persons, at 22 he was the most popular preacher of the day. At one sermon when he preached in the Crystal Palace he preached to a congregation of 24,000 people.

The next letter dated Feb. 7, 1881, is a "thank you" letter to Cousin Robert Allan of Greenock. It seems strange that so punctilious a person as Margaret Jane should wait so long to write this letter but perhaps she had written a shorter note before this.

Elk Mound, Dunn Co., Wis.

Feb. 7, 1881

Mr. Robert Allan
Greenock, Scotand.

Dear Cousin:

You are probably wondering what has become of your Trans-Atlantic cousins, especially those who are under obligations to you—I mean myself—why we are so long silent. Well my dear cousin ill health

has been the principal cause, so begging pardon for the past and hope for the future, without further apology I will proceed to writing.

The guid man sits conning on his Scotch songs—my mother busy with her needle—our school teacher practicing on the organ, our boy outside snowballing. This is a dull dreary day. So much snow and drift they could not get to the schoolhouse this morning. We have the teacher and a boy twelve years old who goes to school—making a family of five.

The cold winter commenced with Nov. and we have had much cold weather. The snow is more than we have had since I came to Elk Creek. The wind has blown since last Friday piling up the snow filling in the roads so that peope are obliged to remain at home. The wind has abated now and the roads will soon be opened. The weather has been mild, since the wind has been blowing. So we hope there has not been the suffering that would have been had the cold been as intense as it has been. There have been fearful storms in Minnesota and Dakota the past months; much suffering for man and beast as they were but poorly prepared for so early and severe winter. We may be thankful we are so favorably situated.

We have had the influenza and are not entirely recovered. The friends at Waneka we have not seen in three weeks. They were all well. Thomas is the only one who retains his family as they were when you were here. Mary Slye is teaching in Eau Claire—Grace at home, Willie in school at St. Paul. Mr. and Mrs. Whitcher have only George with them—Agnes dressmaking in La Crosse. Joe at his sister's in the pinery. Arch has only his wife and little boy.

Our own are all married but Nellie. She is still in school in Delevan. Henry's family are well. The twins are pretty and thriving nicely. John, our oldest son has a boy past two who is bright and smart his grandparents being judges. Sarah (Mrs. Anderson) has a son born Oct. 10. They live at Menomonie—her husband a saddler.

Now I have to thank you for my nice present—so acceptable—(This present was a set of Scott's works. Grandmother left these for Granddaughter Lyla.) I have not been able to read the volumes yet. George found me on the bed although I had been better for about ten days when he came. He had a nice passage home arriving August 11, Friday. Just two weeks from the time he boarded the steamer in Glasgow. He stopped over one train to see the White boys in Chicago.

I must acknowledge Nellie's present from Belle. She was very much pleased. We hope she may yet be able to read the volumes with understanding. One and all accept thanks for kind remembrance of us and also for your kindness to George. I would like to have been with him but once there I think I would prefer to remain. Caledonia County in Vermont could not have been very unlike Scotland. My native town,

Ryegate, was settled by Scotch, also the adjoining town Barnet and I have always had a great desire to see Scotland.

When are you all coming to America? When they get a Bridge—how we will all skip across. Your house is probably nearing completion. Would like to assist at the "Warming". We hope to hear from you soon. I think I'll be more prompt in the future.

With kind regards to one and all, we remain, your sincere cousins
G. A. and M. J. Dickson.

During these days Nellie the deaf mute was attending a special school at Delavan.

WISCONSIN INS.
for the
DEAF AND DUMB
W. H. DeMotte, Sup't.
DEHAVAN, WIS.

The bearer, Nellie Dickson, a pupil of this Inst. is entitled to half fare rate on the Northwestern road from Beloit to Eau Claire.

I write this because I have used up all the cards given me by your Gen. Agt.

Yours—

W. H. DeMotte,
Supt. D. D. Inst.

Delavan, Wis.

6/8/80.

At the time the Dicksons were living at Waneka and Amy there was a Migration of Scotchmen from Vermont to the area around Lake Pepin and Margaret Jane came West with others and taught school in Wisconsin.

A letter from Cousin Robert Allan writes of the visit George has made to Scotland.

Mrs. A. Slye

Dear Cousin,

3 Finnert Terrace
Greenock, 30 June, 1880

It is now I think about one and one-half years since I heard from you and I was afraid you were going to drop correspondence. The last letter I had was from Mary which I answered and if you have written

since it has not come to hand. However a substitute has arrived in the person of Cousin George, he wrote to me that he had arrived, and would soon visit me. I wrote him that I would meet him next day in Glasgow. I did so, and found him at the station going to Paisley. I recognized him at once but he did not seem to see me till I gave him a salute. This was Saturday and as he wished some time in Paisley and Johnston I arranged that he would come to us on Monday Week. I met him at the Prince Pier Station and as the weather was fine and a splendid steamer ready to sail we went on board, sailed up Loch Long—drove over to Loch Lommond and returned home in time for Tea at 5 p.m. We then went to our beautiful Bowling Green and spent two hours seeing the games with which George was quite delighted. Next day we took steamer down the Clyde to Dunoon to visit Mrs. Parker (my sister Janet) and family. We found them all well and spent the day and dined with them, and got home in time for Tea. Next morning started for steamer for Ayr, drove out to Burns. Saw Iain G. Shanter and Souter Johnie ;the Auld Brig O Doon where Lame Mare Maggie lost her tail, then to Alloway Kirk where the witches and warlocks danced to the strains of the Bagpipes, the Piper, being Auld Nick in shape of Beast, but George will tell you all about it when he goes back to Waneka. Next day, a sail through the Kyles of Bute and to Arran, the scenery in all these places is magnificent and George enjoyed it very much. The weather all week he was with us, was beautiful, and was on Monday to go to Edinburgh for two days and then he goes back to London. He can't be up than a week there then he proposes coming back here and go to the Granite Causway near Londonderry; when he left me he thought he would be ready to return by the State of Georgia on the 22nd of July. He seems to have enjoyed his visit to the old country immensely and it will afford subjects for talk for many a long day. I along with the family have done all I could to make his visit pleasant, and if we had not done so, we would deserve to be called everything bad, considering the kindness I received when on my visit to you.

I was sorry to hear from George that you had been ailing a good deal. I hope you are now well. I trust also that Mr. Slye and Willie are well, don't forget to give my kind love to Mary and Grace. I think always of them with the greatest pleasure. If it was not for that wild waste of water, I would be over and see you yet. Kind regards to Cousin Thomas and his dear wife, also to Mr. and Mrs. Whicher and family. Also Arch and his new wife tell him to be very good to her, and I am sure it will be repaid with affectionate kindness. Tell Mrs. George that he has been getting on very comfortably and seems to have enjoyed himself wonderfully. Well I told him he should have brought his better half with him and he would have enjoyed his trip all the

better and now I think I will leave all else for George to tell you the whole of my friends send kind greetings to you all.

I am Dear Cousin

Yours truly,

Robert Allan

John and Ella are busy with the farm and the children. Ella teaches music and is postmistress. She has to drive about six miles to Elk Mound and get the mail and bring it to Amy. The comment which Herodotus, 430 B. C. made to the Persian post riders could have been said of Ella. "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift accomplishments of their appointed routes."

John is farmer and merchant. He has opened a small grocery store at the four corners across from the School house and from the Remington's. This was the Amy store, the Amy School and the Amy Post Office. Ella in her zeal for noble cause and the desire to perpetuate the memory of noble people named this settlement Amy in honor of Amy Kellogg Morse who was a great temperance worker and just the age of Ella.

Amy Cornelia Kellogg who was born at Lake Mills, Wis., March 18, 1853, was married to the Rev. Edgar Morse of Tomah, Wis. Mr. Morse was a Congregational minister, a graduate of Dartmouth and a Prohibitionist, Ella was a Congregationalist, a temperance worker and her brother was a graduate of Dartmouth, thus the naming of this settlement "Amy" had much meaning for her.

Four children were born on the farm near Amy, Charles Harvey, Eliza May (later called Lyla), George Albert, and Faye Elizabeth. Charles was named for his Grandfather Charles Savage and Harvey for the step grandmother; Lyla was named for her Grandmother Savage and for her mother whose name was Ella May; Albert was named for his Grandfather Dickson and for his uncle Albert Savage. Faye was named for a beloved teacher Agnes Free who died in her youth.

The dear little sister Faye died when she was three years old, in 1886. She had the terrible disease of that time, diphtheria, and because of the nature of her illness, her little body

had to be isolated and it was a very tragic experience to have to go outside the house and look through the window and see the little body so alone.



John and Ella Dickson and children, Charles, Lyla and Albert.

The following days must have been filled with fear, not knowing whether another child in the family might be struck by the plague.

One of the pleasant memories of that period was having Melvin Knott and his bride Carrie come to rent part of the house and live there. Both Melvin and his wife were young, good looking, amiable, and gracious.

Another pleasant experience was "going to town". It was an all day trip driving a team a distance of ten miles to town and back. On the way back the children would feast on the crackers and cheese which they had purchased in town; no future gastronomical delight could ever linger in the memory as the crackers and cheese eaten by tired happy children sitting on blanket covered hay in a lumber wagon.

Grandfather and Grandmother Savage came West and lived with their daughter Ella and family. Charles Savage was not a happy man. He had been a singing teacher in New Hamp-



The little white cottage built for Eliza McClaren Clough Savage when she and her husband Charles Wesley Savage came from Lancaster, N. H., to be near their daughters Ella Dickson and Georgia Frye.

shire and had never made much money. He undoubtedly had a frustration complex. Here in an environment less to his liking he probably felt more frustrated. His wife Eliza was a more

practical person and when, after Charles' death, she went to live on her own little plot of land in her little white cottage, she made a good adjustment and was very happy with her flowers and garden. The pansies which she grew have been a life long inspiration to her granddaughter. She had a gift too, for caring for the sick and to the neighbors whom she helped she was "Grandma Savage".

Ella, like her father was musical and had been trained as a pianist. One cold stormy day she had to go to the barn and close a door. Between the cold, the storm, and the difficulty of closing the door she injured her finger and it remained permanently bent which was a great handicap in her piano playing.

In order to give their children better educational advantages, John and Ella decided to move to Eau Claire and go into business there. In 1890 they moved to Eau Claire.

THE EAU CLAIRE YEARS

Where river meets river and friend meets friend,
And over them both the heavens bend,
Where the woods are green and the hills are fair
And the air is cool—well, that's Eau Claire!

Yes, that's Eau Claire on a summer's day,
Where the wild bird sings and the breezes play,
And a welcome waits at the journey's end,
Where river meets river and friend meets friend!

Douglas Malloch

In 1767 Jonathan Carver and a group of adventurers, explored the upper Mississippi and the Chippewa rivers. When they ascended the Chippewa it was so muddy from flood waters that boatmen could not drink it, but when they reached the point, now Eau Claire, they found clear water. A boatman called it Eau Claire, meaning clear water, thus Eau Claire was named.

In 1856 a year after the Vermont Dicksons came to Waukegan, Eau Claire was a village of about a dozen houses and two saw mills. A minister had been sent by the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions to care for the spiritual needs of the settlers. Services were held in the Eau Claire Lumber Company's boarding house, in the Eau Claire House, in an unfinished shanty, in a schoolhouse, and some times in the bar room of the hotel.

In this year a survey had been made for the first streets and this date might be considered the birthday of Eau Claire. The first white child born in what is now the city of Eau Claire was Jennie Reed the daughter of a boarding house keeper, James Reed and his wife Barbara who cooked for the river men who boarded with James Reed. The marriage of James and Barbara was the first marriage ceremony in Eau Claire and was performed by the Reverend Thomas Barland, the preacher who stayed with the Dicksons when he came to Dunn County to preach.

This "mill" city was destined to grow rapidly. With the completion of the West Wisconsin Railroad in 1870 dependence on the river as a source of supplies from the outside world was lessened and new horizons were expanded.

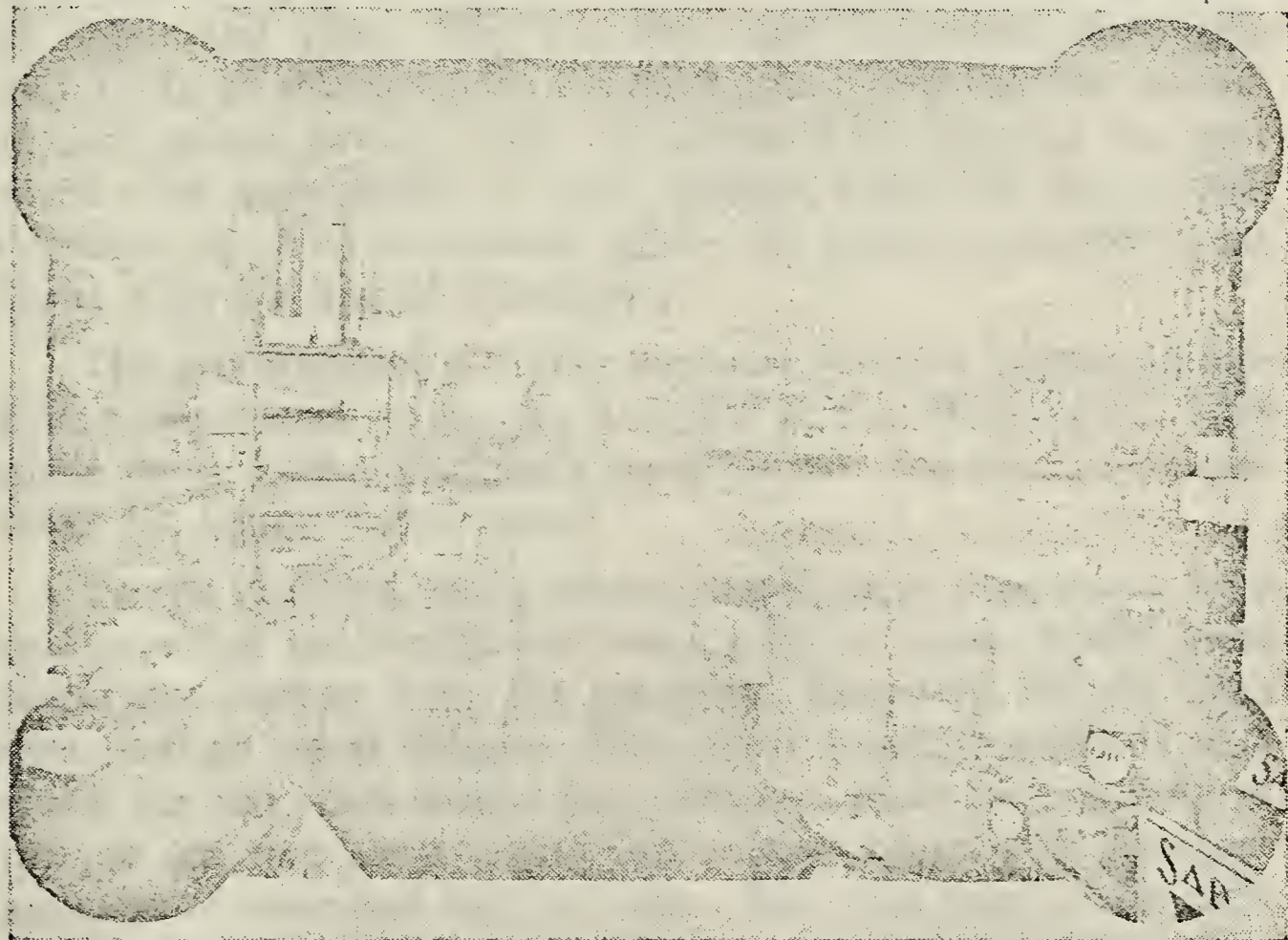
In 1890 when John and Ella Dickson—with their family of Charles, Lyla and Albert moved to Eau Claire the busy lumbering town had a population of 17,415. The areas of the city were expressed as East Side, North Side, West Side and "Third Ward". The Third Ward represented the height of aristocracy for many years and to live in the "Third Ward" placed one socially.

When the family moved to Eau Claire their first home was on First Avenue in a Norwegian neighborhood and these blonde Scandinavians looked like foreigners to the little Dicksons who had seen much black hair and black eyes among their Scotch relatives.

When making plans to move to Eau Claire, John had decided to own and operate a grocery store. Having saved the necessary capital, he purchased a business at 420 Bellinger Street. For the sum of \$225 he secured an entire stock of groceries, furniture, and fixtures. This was at this time the Sixth Ward; later it was to become the Ninth Ward. This area had the unsavory title of the "Bloody Sixth", a title which developed as a result of the lumbermen coming from the woods and patronizing the saloons; they would get drunk and become involved in bloody brawls. Unfortunately these incidents frequently occurred on Sundays which did not help the reputation of the ward.

In those days a grocery store was as much a charitable institution as a means of earning a livelihood. Men were working ten hours a day for six days per week at a wage of one dollar per day and it was not unusual for them to be out of work for long periods of time. For the poor or unfortunate there were about three choices of help in times of need. They could get "poor relief" from the city and be subjected to the scorn of their neighbors who found out that they were being helped; they might go to the "poorhouse"; or they could find some sympa-

thetic grocer who would "charge" the groceries. The charge accounts were many and the collections hard to make. A cash customer or a charge customer who paid his bills regularly was a prince among men; such a customer was a Mr. Jewett who lived some distance from the store and who was held in high esteem by the grocer and his family.



Interior of John Dickson's Grocery Store on Bellinger St. Left to right, Charles Dickson, Edward Peisch, John Dickson, about 1900.

The grocery store was also a friendly meeting place. Not many people had telephones as the telephone had only recently been invented (1876); there were no automobiles; the news of the day was exchanged over the counter. Late in the afternoon was a good time to make some purchases for the evening meal and to pick up some bits of gossip.

The men used the store for talking politics. The farmers made the store their headquarters when they had business in the city. Their cracker and cheese lunch as they stood around a stove or a cracker barrel was a fore runner of the sandwich and coffee lunch of the drug store of today. The cracker barrel,

the apple barrel, the raisin bin and the cheese case was always available to him who would help himself and it sometimes taxed the generosity of the grocer to see such large wedges of cheese being consumed "for free".

Saturday night was the big night of the week, customers had some cash, they were in a holiday mood, and they had time to linger and visit. This was the night they paid their bills and a bag of chocolates in a striped paper sack was the reward to each person paying a bill. As always down through the ages there were inequalities, it never seemed quite fair that a cash customer received no reward while the charge customer went home with his bag of chocolates.

The grocery store was also the local weather bureau, of sufficient importance to receive mention in the daily paper. This made news, "John Dickson's thermometer this morning registered 38 degrees below zero."

To the children, being sent to the grocery store was a very real privilege for they knew that a piece of candy would come across the counter with the groceries. Shopping for the day's meat was an equal delight. This chore could be assigned to a child; for ten cents would buy sufficient steak for a family of five or six, five cents would buy a soup bone with generous amounts of meat and liver was free. No child went to the meat market without asking, "May I have a piece of bologna?" The friendly Mr. Kitzman was ready with a large piece of hot perfectly seasoned piece of bologna—all meat. No child could ever forget the gastronomical delight of that steaming hot piece of bologna:

Soon after John Dickson came to Eau Claire and started in business he received a legacy from the estate of an uncle Jim. Turnbull who had died in Connecticut. It was not a large amount \$131.70 to be exact but to a man just starting in business and raising a family it undoubtedly came as a pleasant surprise. John and his brothers and sisters would have remained ignorant of this legacy if a cousin in Meridan hadn't taken it upon herself to locate them. She must have written to an official

and received the names of two men one a John Dickson, and one a John Dixon. In her letter to John Dickson she wrote, "Will you kindly write me if you are related to the Turnbulls of Simsbury or Tariffville. Ct., if not will you please send this letter to John Dixon of your city." In the letter from the Administrator, he says, "I was ready to divide it among the other heirs, not knowing of yourself and fortunately your letter came in time." An incident such as this leads on to wonder how frequently this sort of thing must have occurred.

For thirty years John Dickson had a grocery store at 420 and later at 510 Bellinger Street and as evidence of the charitable function of the neighborhood grocery store there was found in the bank box of John Dickson after his death an accumulation of notes for money borrowed by many people who had been in need. No mention had ever been made of the loans and he never expected to be repaid.

The family moved from first Avenue, perhaps because it was so near the river, to a house on First Street, some distance from the store then into a house of their own on Bellinger Street. This house was across the street from the Second Congregational Church (recently renamed the Plymouth Congregational) and the Dickson home became a center for church, civic and Temperance activities. Ella played the organ for church services, the piano for Sunday School and was Superintendent of the Primary Department. She was very active in any cause which she supported. One of her civic contributions was the securing of a public drinking fountain. Watering troughs for the use of horses were provided but there was no place where a human could get a drink of water. John, too, made his contribution to the church and community. One of his civic activities was to serve as Alderman from the Sixth Ward or Ninth Ward as it now is. He was actively interested in the Eau Claire Building and Loan Association and the Y.M.C.A.

The Dickson household was a busy one. Two children were born after the family moved to Eau Claire. One, Leslie, died when a baby, the other, Arthur, was stricken at ten years of age with Cerebral Meningitis and, after weeks of unconscious-

ness, died. Ella did all of the housework, cooking, cleaning, canning, washing and ironing and most of the family sewing. She helped at the store when needed; she boarded a teacher at times; she taught piano lessons and did much church work. When writers and poets tell of "the good old times" they are thinking of the duties of the house wife of earlier days—when there was no refrigeration, when all perishable food had to be taken down steep narrow stairs to the "cellar" after each meal; when there were no washing machines, no supply of hot water, no electric irons; when lamps had to be filled and chimneys cleaned each day; when it was an insult to the man of the house to offer him "store" bread or "store" cake or cookies. In the kitchen there was a "wood" cook stove and behind it a wood box which had to be kept filled with wood. There were seasonal jobs such as taking up the carpets, cleaning them and putting fresh straw under them and tacking them down again. Many woolen garments were worn and in the spring they had to be cleaned, aired and carefully wrapped and stored away for the next season. In the spring too the year's supply of soap had to be made. On the back porch were several barrels filled with the winter's wood ashes. A hole would have been made in the bottom of the barrel. Small amounts of water were poured over the ashes and allowed to drip through. The liquid drained off provided the lye; and the fat for the soap had been saved during the winter. Another seasonal job was undertaken after cold weather set in. Late in the fall quarters of beef and halves of hogs were purchased for a few cents per pound. Then the meat was cut up; parts were frozen, part was made into mince meat. Hams and bacon were smoked, fat pork was salted down, sausage was made—all meat—no cereal, pork steak and pork chops were fried, placed in stone crocks, and covered with hot fat which preserved them for future use. Fat was tried out into lard and the scraps were eaten with salt or mixed with corn meal mush and fried. This was a particularly delightful time for those not doing the work for the abundance and variety of meat provided a base for very good meals. "Head Cheese", a sausage made from pork was most delectable.

In addition to this routine of much hard work, Ella entertained many guests. In those days there were always "spare" bed rooms and relatives would come and visit for long periods of time. "Aunt Maggie" who had no children was a problem guest. She came frequently and was always disturbed by the noise and confusion of the children; she used to think that they should always be taking naps, and Ella would remark to a sympathetic ear, "I can't have all the children taking naps all of the time." It would have been interesting if Ella had kept a register of her guests for many later to become famous people were entertained in her home, for it was the custom then for visiting speakers, singers, etc. to be lodged and fed in private homes, and the Dickson home was always available.

The really important day for one whose roots were in New England as were Ella's was Thanksgiving Day. This day of feasting was celebrated at Aunt Charlotte Langdell's Aunt Georgia Frye's or at Ella's. Weeks and days were spent in preparation. There might be twenty or thirty guests and they always stayed for dinner and supper. The guests might have to go home and do "chores" but they returned for supper whenever possible.

Dinner did not always include turkey, if not turkey, roast chicken. The conversation for weeks before was "Do you suppose the prices of turkeys will be such that we can have turkey?" For dinner there would be oyster stew, chicken pie, roast turkey or roast chicken, scalloped oysters, mashed potatoes, mashed squash, mashed rutabaga, perhaps creamed onions; cole slaw; white and dark bread; cranberries, jellies, jams, pickles, frequently beet pickles; three kinds of pies, apple, mince and pumpkin; celery when available.

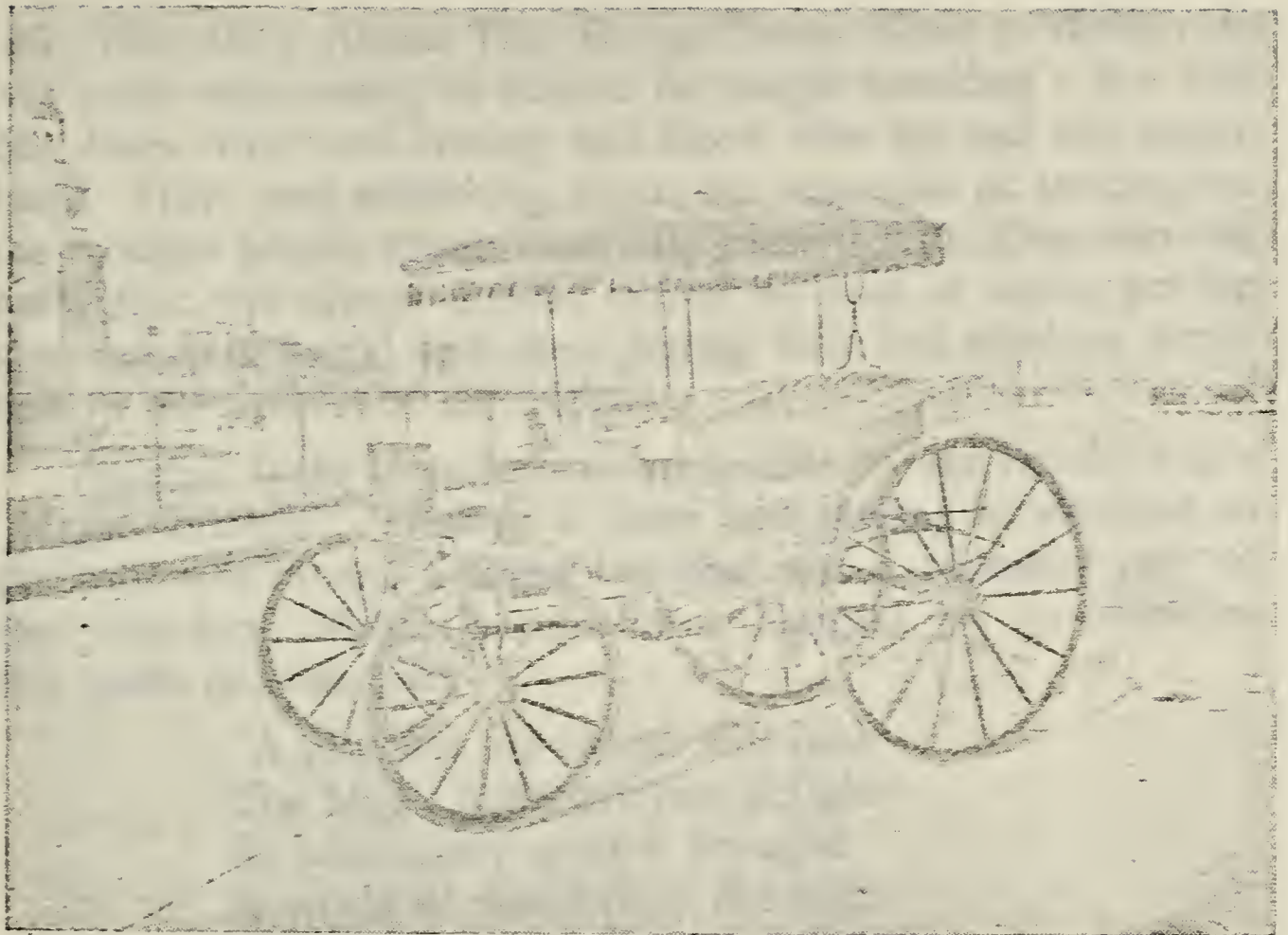
Parched sweet corn was always a part of the New England Thanksgiving dinner and a dish of this might be available for a tid-bit. The apple and mince pies were made up long in advance and frozen and a standing joke was that the housewife marked her mince pies T.M. ('tis mince) and her apple pies T.M. (tain't mince), doughnuts, cookies, and perhaps cake were served at the supper meal with cold turkey and other foods.

This all sounds perfect but there was a note of bitterness, the children had to eat at the SECOND TABLE. Can any one ever forget the pangs of hunger which, practically unendurable, tormented the children while the "grown-ups" were gorging themselves with this fabulous food. If the home were large enough and if the guests not too many, there might be tables set up for the children.

The occasions on which they went to Aunt Charlotte's for Thanksgiving Dinner were sometimes a great test of endurance, for if the weather were zero or much below, a nine mile drive, sitting on the floor of a sleigh with never enough blankets and trying to urge on the unwilling black horse "Nig" could have been fatal. "Nigger" was a smart and obstinate horse. He knew when there was a lady behind the reins and he refused to go faster than a walk. The horse whip in the hands of a gentle lady held no fear for him. John, who could give up more easily, dreaded these ventures in zero weather so he was always glad of an excuse to stay home and his best excuse was to care for a baby or a child too young to take this hard trip. But for the indomitable Ella neither ice nor snow would keep her from celebrating Thanksgiving Day with her kin.

Perhaps this Thanksgiving feast was a release from the rigid standards of living imposed on the family by Puritan ancestors of New England and by the Blue Laws of Connecticut, under whose influence John had been reared. Both John and Ella had been taught to look upon cards and dancing as amusements fostered by the devil and were to be forbidden in the home.

On Sunday every activity was based on religion. No food was cooked on Sunday. The main dish would be the warmed over Saturday night beans. Those and tea would be the only hot foods served on Sunday. Only religious music could be played, only religious stories could be read, the children could not go out of the yard nor could they have children in to play with them. There were no Sunday papers. To go for a boat ride or to skate on Sunday would almost certainly invite Divine punishment. The family did however purchase a two seated



The Family Carriage; Surrey about 1890.

Courtesy of Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich.

surrey "with a fringe on the top" and a Sunday afternoon drive with the family was customary and this was real joy for the children for it meant a ride to the farm of Aunt Georgia and Uncle Allie Frye where untold pleasures awaited. There were the barns with hay on which to slide, the farm animals, usually a pony for the children, dogs, cats, edible fruits, watermelon, musk melon and vegetables in the gardens and always popcorn and milk for supper.

The two family horses were as unlike as possible; "Nig" was big, black, inclined to be fat, slow and very stubborn, responding only to a masculine driver, a woman driver he scorned and he made his own decisions. Don was a slender reddish brown horse, very sensitive, very temperamental and very unruly at times. They must have been very unhappy together pulling the carriage, Don eager to move fast and Nig pulling back. The only times Nig ever picked up any speed was when Ella was driving and he was crossing a bridge which bore a sign

"No Travelling Across This Bridge Faster Than a Walk". It was most embarrassing to Ella to be caught breaking a law and Nig knew who was driving and knew that he had the upper hand. There was something about the sensation of trotting on the wooden boards which especially pleased him. Don was the horse that was always getting out of his stall at night, getting into the food barrel and then getting sick and needing attention in the middle of the night.

Another form of recreation acceptable to the family was a "Magic Lantern". Finding a sheet and getting it attached to the wall was always a strain but that was a necessary part of the procedure. Magic lanterns have brought joy to others as this poem demonstrates

"A pity that my babies will miss
The Magic Lantern's rare delight!
So luminously quiet it brought
A world of wonders to the sight.
Entranced and innocent we gazed
At rainbow views of field and town—
And shrieked with pleasure at the sight
Of slides inserted upside down."

Nora Smoridge

Courtesy of The Christian Science Monitor

The children and young people may have felt that they needed more recreation but the parents were satisfied if they could have a nap and Sunday afternoon might offer them that treat.

The store was always open at seven in the morning and kept open until six or after if there were tardy shoppers. On Saturday nights the store was open until ten or eleven o'clock. At night there were chores to do around the house a garden to care for, the horses to be fed and watered, perhaps chickens which needed attention. At one time Ella decided that the family should have a cow. John refused to have anything to do with it because he didn't think the barn odor and groceries would mix. The boys thought they could learn to milk so a

"family cow" was purchased. The experiment was short lived as no one had any enthusiasm for milking a cow.

On Sunday afternoons in lieu of a nap John would secure rest and relaxation by letting the children search for grey hairs in his head. For every gray hair a penny. This was an inexpensive method of keeping everyone happy.

The same rigid standards which were applied to recreation were applied to the children's reading; very few books were considered suitable. The Bible and Bible stories were a "must" in reading. Books which were permitted were "Little Women", "Black Beauty", "Robinson Crusoe", "Gulliver's Travels", and "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

One of the delightful customs then, as now, was to pop corn and eat apples. The corn was popped in an iron kettle with plenty of fat and salt. The apples were fresh from the barrels in the cool cellar. Each fall the family purchased several barrels of apples and placed them in the cellar. The day they were delivered was a red letter day for the children as they eagerly waited for a barrel to be opened and sampled. With apples for evening lunch and apple pie at each meal several barrels could be consumed. Sometimes the apples were peeled in such a manner as to get the peeling off in one spiral, this spiral was then thrown over the shoulder and dropped on the floor; the letter which it formed would represent the initial of a person in whom a lad or lassie might have a romantic interest.

Although the day of the vitamin had not yet arrived the wisdom of experience had led them to hold to certain practices such as "an apple a day keeps the Doctor away," and "a mess of dandelion greens in the spring of the year is as good as a spring tonic."

In the 1890's George Dickson and his wife Margaret Jane bought a cozy little house on Maple Street and moved to Eau Claire. In 1902 George died at the age of 86 years, thus passed a link in the chain of Scotch ancestors. A few years later Margaret Jane died. Her will is indicative of her orderly mind, her sense of fairness and her confidence in her step-son John

Dickson. John and his step-mother had great mutual respect and affection for each other. Her will was made out before George's death so what she had was her own and her mother's.

This is her will:

"It is my desire and wish that the blue and white counterpane in the chest of drawers in the shop be sent to my brother R. G. Harvey, Igo, California, also the comfortable and the best feather bed. The other feather bed Bettie can divide among her children. The single bed with mattress, four sheets, two blankets, seamless, and white spread, two small pillows with two pair of tucked cases, a comfortable, patch work quilt—brick—be given to Lizzie J. Greene. My gray wool shawl and Standard Dictionary to my namesake Margaret J. Greene. The china saucers and fine solid silver teaspoons be divided among my nephews and nieces. Two white wool blankets overcast with red—one to Oren W. Harvey and one to Lewis R. Harvey, the small bureau goes with the single bed. White counterpane to Oren W. Harvey. Nine patch work quilts to Lewis R. Harvey, two large silver tablespoons, one to Oren and one to Lewis.

Books and other small things divide so each of my friends may have a little memento. The above articles were nearly all Mother's so they ought to be divided among her kindred.

There are articles which I hope will please my dear friends who have been so kind to me. May God bless them. As to my mother's money matters John Dickson knows about it and will give information to those interested. Mother's Bible to R. G. Harvey.

Margaret J. Dickson
Eau Claire, Wis.

March 20, 1902

My bureau with deck drawers and mirror to Charles H. Dickson.

In 1912 John took temporary leave of his business to go with Ella to assist their daughter who was teaching her first

year of school at Wautoma, Wis., and making a home for her small son Lawrence. His grandson, Russell writes to his grandfather as follows:

Eau Claire, Wis.
Nov. 8, 1912

Dear Grandpa:

How are you? I am good. How do you like to go for your groceries? Don't you wish they had wagons like we have here?

Your Grandson

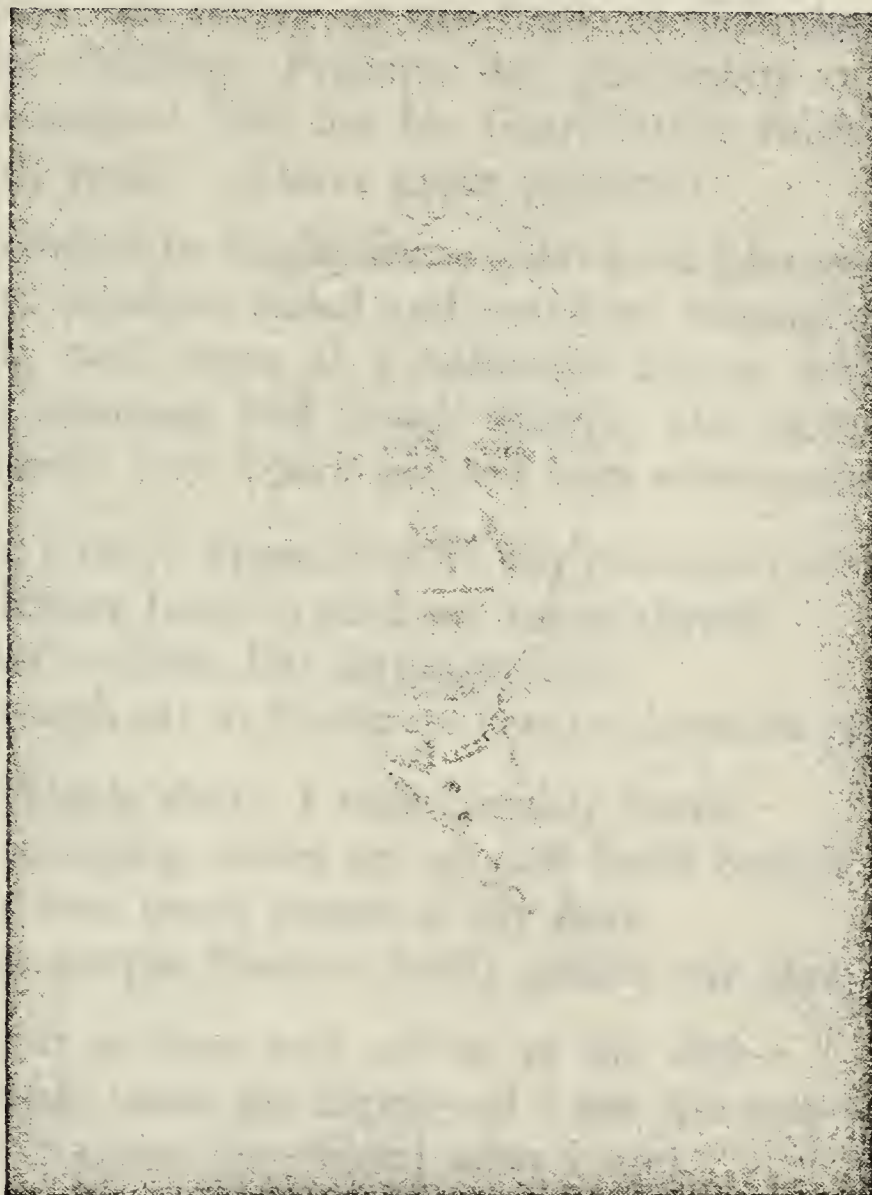
Russell.

Were the grandsons writing this record they would have many a tale to tell of pranks they played when they were helping their grandfather. Delivering groceries in the horse and buggy days offered many an opportunity for boyish pranks. When John's son Charles delivered groceries the problem was one of delay. Charles was popular with the customers for he could play the piano and while the horse and wagon and other customers waited patiently Charles would be in some one's parlor playing the piano.

In March of 1918 an epidemic of "Influenza" took a toll of many lives. The sudden death of Ella Dickson, March 7, 1918, from this "Flu" was a great shock to her family and friends. The Eau Claire paper wrote as follows "She was loved by everyone who had the good fortune to become acquainted with her. While she was an admirable home maker and a charming hostess her great heart of love reached out to all who needed her help. In church and Sunday School work she was most efficient. In social and charitable work she was kind and tactful. In whatever she undertook to do she did her best and got the best results. She was a tireless worker for the cause of temperance and was for many years President of the Demarest W.C.T.U. In the exercise of that office were displayed her prominent traits of character—force, executive ability, tactfulness, and thought, and above all a sweetness that was irresistible. There was never a jarring note in her administration.

She was also a member of the Eastern Star and the Women's Club, and she was an active member of the Associated Charities."

In her honor the name of the Demarest W.C.T.U. was changed to the Ella M. Dickson Union.



Ella M. Savage Dickson, about 1910.

After John's retirement from business, gardening gave him great pleasure and here his standards of order and perfection produced excellent results.

In his late eighties he was still active even to the extent of climbing on the roof and cleaning off the snow, much to the consternation of the neighbors.

Money was never an important factor in his life; if by economy and hard work he accumulated any he was more than likely to give it to some one who needed it more than he did. The September day in 1929, the day the Bank closed and a large portion of his savings was gone he was drilling holes in

a cement floor. When Mrs. Ayer excitedly told him the news, his terse remark was "So the bank failed" the bank which had for its motto "As strong as the Rock of Gibraltar". And he resumed his drilling. Perhaps the philosophy of his Scotch ancestors sustained him for his Grandfather might have said. "Dinna fash yersel" (Don't upset yourself).

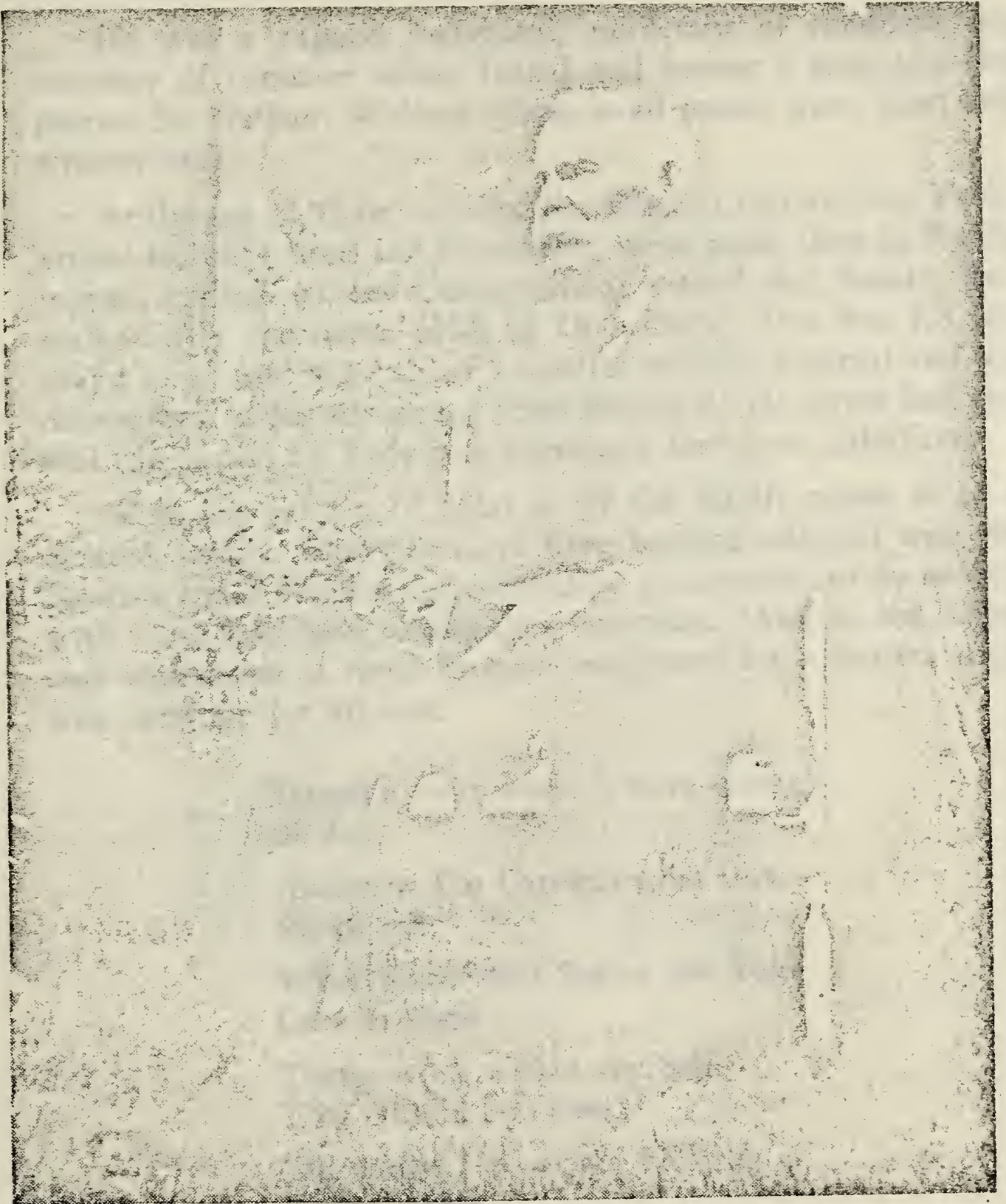
The birthdays in his declining years gave him much pleasure. Friends, and relatives called and sent him messages. Invariably the greeting cards were of a humorous nature and were illustrated with costumes and Scotch dialect. His niece Violet sent him an original card which pleased him very much.

"Spare Uncle! Spare, frae aff thy precious time,
A leisure hour to read my rustic rhyme,
And wi' a critic, but forgiving eye,
Through all its Faults or Fancied beauties pry
Deed, Uncle dear! I only humbly botch
In stringing verses up in guid braid Scotch
I ne'er read mony poems a' my days
Pure simple Nature chiefly guides my lays
Now just to come and call on ye this day—
'Twould make me happy—if I saw the way—
But as it canna be—Heed what I say!
I'll surely come to greet ye some fin day!
To copy Nature! Who acts such a part?
If I a poet were, I'd rhyme by 'art!
"Come Uncle! Gie's thy hand, heres to thy health!
Thy lasting happiness—and wealth."

Violet

Mrs. Class and Hilda Oxby brought Shortbread, Heather and Scotch blue bells to these gatherings.

He had a keen mind and a quiet sense of humor which remained with him until his last meal at the table. There were two vegetables on the table parsnips and carrots. The dish of carrots was near Grandfather and one at the table looked at



John Dickson

the carrots and said, "Will you please pass the parsnips Grandfather". He passed the carrots and said nothing. Later at the table this person, who hadn't known her vegetables had occasion to say to Grandfather in fun "Well now that wasn't so smart" and quick as a flash he replied "Well at least I know the difference between carrots and parsnips."

He was a rugged individual, intolerant of nonsense, an emissary of common sense, frugal and honest a man like the patriot Sir William Wallace whose word meant more than any written oath.

At the age of 92 he attended the World's Fair at New York; visited his old haunts in Connecticut; spent some time in Washington, calling on his Congressmen; visited the Senate; and walked over the battle fields of Gettysburg. This was his last major trip. And after this his zest for activity lessened and the discomforts of his advancing years increased. He never had any real illness and his body was seemingly free from infection.

With the passing of John at 94 the family ceases to be a Scottish family. Other cultures have become mingled with the Scottish and it remains for succeeding generations to do as well with what they have as did their ancestors. And so the hopes and aspirations of these Scottish emigrants for a better world will continue for all time.

"Farewell vain world I have enough
of thee

And now I'm Careless what thou
Say of me

What Fault thou See in me Take
Care to Shun

Theres work within thy Self
That Should be Done

Thy smiles I court not Nor thy
Frown I fear

My Cares are past My heart
lies quiet here."

(An epitaph taken from a stone in the old Granary
Burying Ground at Boston, Mass.)



John Dickson

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FAMILY RECORDS

"The best thing that history yields to us is the enthusiasm it generates"—Goethe

Begin your records with your earliest recorded ancestors;
space is provided for twelve generations.

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Generation | Family |
| Name | Born at |
| Father | Mother |
| Born at | Born at |
| Died buried at | Died buried at |
| Married at | |
| Died buried at | |
| Occupation | |
| Residence | |
| Other Biographical data | |
| | |
| Married | on at |
| Died buried at | |
| Son or daughter of | and |
| Born at | Born at |
| Died buried at | Died buried at |
| Married at | |
| Other Biographical data | |
| | |
| Children of | and |
| Names | |
| Born at | Died buried at |
| Married to | on at |
| Born at | Died buried at |
| Married to | on at |
| Born at | Died buried at |
| Married to | on at |
| Born at | Died buried at |
| Married to | on at |

Know all Men by these Presents,

That Roll Tildstad and Son, Ferguson Co-
partners as Tildstad & Ferguson

of Lincoln County, Wisconsin, of the first part, for and in consideration of

Two Hundred and Twenty-five Dollars,
to us paid by John H. Dickson of the town of Spring & Rock Lincoln County, Wisconsin

of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have bargained, sold, granted, transferred, assigned and conveyed, and by these presents do bargain, sell, grant, transfer, assign and convey unto the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns,

The entire stock of groceries with furniture
and fixtures, utensils and
appliances now contained in store
in the store frame building owned by
William McComb and lately occupied by
said firm of Tildstad & Ferguson which store
is known as No. 20 Bellinger Street in
the North Ward of the City of Eau Claire, except
various safe of Hall's safe stock Co. made
and weighing about \$1200, which safe is now
contained in said store and is kept also from
this sale all the potatoes now in the cellar un-
der said store, and any other goods, our light
spring delivery wagon and one pair of light
foot-blades, formerly used in said grocery bu-
siness by said firm of Tildstad & Ferguson
unless excepted and included from this bill
of sale as well as its contents and shipping
charges paid by Wm McComb

To Have and to Hold, the same unto the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns forever. And we do for ourselves and our heirs, executors and administrators, covenant and agree to and with the said party of the second part, that we are the lawful owners of said property, that the same is free from all encumbrances; and that we have good right to sell the same as aforesaid, and will warrant and defend the said property hereby sold unto the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns, against the lawful claims and demands of all persons.

In Witness Whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals, this 8th day of April, A. D. 1892

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|--------|
| <u>O. D. Ferguson</u> | } | <u>Ever Ferguson</u> | [SEAL] |
| <u>William McComb</u> | | <u>Roll Tildstad</u> | [SEAL] |

M^{rs} Arch Johnston
Bridge of Johnston
A M Ship R George H^c Dangle Street
Canterbury near Paisley
H. Brittain

Mary^e George Forbes Nov 28 1800

Hon^d Mother

This with my Duty to you
and to Inform you that I am in
good Health as I hope is the Case
with you - I have wrote to you 3
Letters, and am Surprised that I have
Gott no Answer Having had no
Letter from you since March Last
if I have Offended you in any Respect
I am entirely Ignorant of it and
therefore I Desire your Immediate Ans.

My dear Sir,
I have the pleasure to inform you
that the same has been forwarded
to you by the same
conveyance.

Yours faithfully,
J. M. Smith

I have the pleasure to inform you
that the same has been forwarded
to you by the same
conveyance. I have the pleasure
to inform you that the same
has been forwarded to you by the
same conveyance. I have the
pleasure to inform you that the
same has been forwarded to you
by the same conveyance.

to this - Blessed be God now Peace is
Made I hope in a few Months to have
the Happiness to of Seeing you but
there has been no Ships as has Paid
off nor do I see any Prospect of it at
Present - I know not where my Father's
Ship is, so that I can give you no
Account of him. Later than about five
weeks ago he was then very well.
I have nothing particular to mention
but my Love to my B^s and Sisters -
Respects to all my young friends

and Remain your Duty full
Son Arch Johnston

PS

I beg you to write Directly

Direct to Lorbay or Lindblaven

